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ABSTRACT

The impacts of the Grade 12 Provincial Examination Program on the educational system in British Columbia and its participants were studied. Beginning with the 1983-84 school year, students in British Columbia have been required to take an end-of-course provincial examination in each academic course they take. The study began with a review of pertinent literature to establish the history and purposes of the examinations. Instruments developed through interviews and separate survey questionnaires were used to survey and obtain responses from the following groups: (1) 1,833 12th-grade students; (2) 608 parents of 12th-grade students; (3) 947 teachers of 12th-grade students; (4) 137 school counselors; (5) 160 high school principals; and (6) 35 district superintendents. There was no clear indication of the effects of the Provincial Examination on individuals' standards for student achievement. Students recognized increased stress as a major problem with the program, but they acknowledged that the program led them to work harder and study more than they had before they participated in the program. Teachers, principals, counselors, and superintendents indicated that the program has had a major effect on teaching practice in that the examination has become a focus of instructional content. Recommendations based on the study findings are summarized for the continuation and enhancement of the examination program. Twenty-nine tables present study recommendations. Eleven appendices comprising about half of the document provide a preliminary description of examination impacts and a summary of in-school interviews conducted in June of 1989, and present the student, parent, teacher, principal, counselor, and superintendent questionnaires. (SLD)

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The Impact of Provincial Examinations on Education in British Columbia: General Report[1]

John O. Anderson and Walter Muir
University of Victoria
David J. Bateson and David Blackmore
University of British Columbia
W. Todd Rogers
University of Alberta

March 30, 1990

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Beginning with the 1983/84 school year, high school students in British Columbia have been required to write end-of-course provincial examinations in each examinable Grade 12 academic course in which they enroll. The purposes of these examinations, as stated by the Ministry of Education [17] are:

> ... to ensure that grade 12 students meet consistent provincial standards of achievement in the academic subjects. The examination program will ensure that graduating students from all schools in the province will be treated equitably when applying for admission to universities and other post-secondary institutions. An additional purpose of this program is to respond to strong public concerns for improved standards of education. [17, p.6]

These provincial examinations are administered three times a year: in January following the completion of the first semester; in June following the completion of the full year or the second semester; and in August for those who, due to extenuating circumstances, were unable to write in January or June, or who wish to write a supplemental exam to improve their mark in the subject. Table 1.1 lists the fifteen examinable subjects and, as an example of the numbers of students who participate in the program, the numbers of students writing the examinations in the January and June, 1989 administrations.

All grade 12 students must write at least one examination in order to graduate, either English 12 or Communications 12. The number of provincial examinations a student writes is dependent upon the structure of the Grade 12 program in which the student is enrolled.

The mark a student obtains on the Provincial Examination is combined with a mark awarded by the school (the teacher) to produce the student's final mark (%) and grade (A, B, C+, C, P, F) in the course. Up through the 1988/89 school year, the Provincial Examination mark and the school mark contributed equally

Table 1.1: Number of students writing Provincial examinations, January and June, 1989

	Number of Students Writing	
Subject	January	June
Algebra	2 857	9 795
Biology	2 007	7 741
Chemistry	1 234	5 881
Communications	1 094	4 618
English	6 420	21 338
English literature	577	3 354
Francais-langue	not offered	223
French	1 136	4 838
Geography	1 599	6 644
Geology	not offered	749
German	not offered	185
History	1 562	6 205
Latin	not offered	11
Physics	432	3 343
Spanish	not offered	200

to the final composite or aggregate mark and grade. Starting in 1989/90, the contribution of the Provincial Examination mark will be reduced to 40%.

In addition to the Grade 12 Provincial Examination Program, the British Columbia Ministry of Education administers two other testing programs on an annual basis: the Grade 12 Scholarship Examination Program, and the Provincial Assessment Program.

The Grade 12 Scholarship Program is designed for students who intend to continue on to post-secondary education and wish to be considered for a government scholarship. Those students who choose to participate in the Scholarship Program are required to write scholarship exams in at least three academic subjects (other than English 12). The Scholarship examinations are written in separate one hour extensions of the regular Provincial Examination in that subject (English 12 is not included in the scholarship program at this time). The scores on the the best three Scholarship Exams are combined with those of the Provincial Examination in the corresponding subject to determine the award winners.

The Provincial Assessment Program assesses student performance in a selected curriculum area annually at grades 4, 7 and 10. For example, in the 1988/89 school year Social Studies was assessed, in 1989/90 mathematics will be assessed. The intents of the Assessment Program are to provide:

- provincial, district and school data describing present achievement levels and changes in these levels over time;
- direction for curriculum revision and development;
- direction for both pre- and in-service teacher education; and
- direction for the allocation of resources by the Ministry of Education.

Unlike the Provincial Examination Program, where all students write the same exam in each subject area and results are reported at the individual student level, the Assessment Program students write one of three or four different test forms within each grade, and the lowest level of aggregation of results is at the school level.

1.1 Purpose of the Present Study

This study was designed to address the general question:

> *What are the impacts of the Grade 12 Provincial Examination Program upon the educational system and its participants in British Columbia?*

In contrast to the Scholarship Examinations, which students voluntarily take, and the Learning Assessments, where student-level reporting is not done, many more questions and concerns have been raised about the "higher stakes" Provincial Examination Program. The extent to which the purposes of the Provincial Examination Program have been approached had not been investigated at the time this study was being developed. It was felt by the researchers and the Ministry of Education that a province-wide testing program involving all graduating high school students and a significant proportion of their teachers warranted study of the program's effects.

As reported in the next section of this report, there has been, and continues to be, discussion and questioning of the need for provincial examinations. Despite the endorsement of the Grade 12 examinations by the recent Royal Commission [27] and the reaction of the Ministry of Education [3] to continue and expand the Examination Program albeit with reduced weighting, there are still those who oppose the the use of these tests. For example, two of the advisory research teams to the Royal Commission disagreed on the continued use of Grade 12 examinations. Another recent example is provided by the comments of the provincial Auditor-General [1] in regard to discrepancies between examination marks and school marks awarded to students, and the narrowing of the curriculum brought about by the Grade 12 Examinations. He recommended that the Ministry review the program to determine its impact on curriculum and teaching practices. Further, the debate continues in the province between those who see Provincial Grade 12 Examinations as the means of ensuring graduating standards are challenging and consistent across the province and those who, while they agree that challenging and consistent standards are important, point out the shortcomings and adverse effects of such examinations.

Accordingly, the study attempted to investigate and describe some of the impacts the program was perceived to be having upon key participant groups — students, teachers, parents, administrators, post-secondary institutions, and potential employers of students — and upon major elements of the educational system — teaching practices and curriculum.

1.2 Organization of the Report

The remainder of this report consists of four major chapters with supporting appendices.:

Chapter 2: *The Context of Provincial Examinations in British Columbia* — A document review and interviews with key personnel were conducted to determine, as fully as possible, the intentions behind the initiation of the current Provincial Examinations Program in 1983-84. A brief history of high school examinations in B.C. is presented, beginning with the first administration of provincial examinations in 1876 and concluding with a description of current controversies centred on the present Provincial Examination Program.

Chapter 3: *Design of the Project* —
The project is described in terms of its design and implementation. A multiple method - multiple source design was implemented to obtain a comprehensive portrayal of the opinions and perceptions of those who responded to the interview and survey questions asked. Responses from students and their parents, teachers, counsellors, principals, superintendents, employers, and admissions officers from colleges and universities constitute the major sources of the data.

Chapter 4: *Findings of the Project* —
The results of questionnaires used in the study are organized under six subsections:

1. *Intentions* — the extent to which the stated intentions of the examination program were perceived to have been attained and any unstated intentions were perceived.

2. *Students* — the effects of the exam program on students.

3. *Teachers* — the effects of the exam program on teachers and teaching practice.

4. *Schools* — the effects of the exam program on schools.

5. *Utilization* — the ways in which the exam program and its results are used.

6. *Other* — those effects which are not categorized above.

In addition, summaries of the interview data and the focus groups discussions are included.

Chapter 5: *Summary and Recommendations* —

An integrated summary of the findings and recommendations for change based on the study are presented.

Chapter 2

The Context of Provincial Examinations in British Columbia

Beginning with the 1983/84 school year, students in British Columbia have been required to write the end-of-course provincial examination set for each examinable Grade 12 academic course in which they enroll. These examinations are administered three times a year — in January following completion of first-semester courses; in June following completion of second-semester and full year courses; and in August for students who wish to write a supplemental examination to improve a course standing and for students, who, due to extenuating circumstances, were not able to write in January or June. Students in 15 courses are tested: English 12, Communications 12, Algebra 12, Biology 12, Physics 12, Chemistry 12, Geology 12, Literature 12, Geography 12, History 12, French 12, Francais-Langue 12, German 12, Spanish 12, and Latin 12 [1]

The purposes of this Provincial Examination Program stated by the Ministry of Education are:

> ... to ensure that grade 12 students meet consistent provincial standards of achievement in the academic subjects. The examination program will also ensure that graduating students from all schools in the province will be treated equitably when applying for admission to universities and other post-secondary institutes. An additional purpose of this program is to respond to strong public concerns for improved standards of education [17, p.6].

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[1] Other academic Grade 12 courses which are not examined include, for example, Computer Science 12, Geometry 12, Law 12, and Western Civilization 12.

The examination for each course is set by a committee of experienced teachers in the subject area. Referenced to provincially-established curriculum goals and objectives for the course, both selection (multiple choice) and supply (problems; short answer; essay) items are used within each examination to measure knowledge, application, and higher order thinking skills [5, p.22, Table 1].

The tests are administered by teachers in the schools according to an administration schedule set by the Ministry of Education. Seven days are required for administration of the full set of 15 examinations. With the exception of English 12 and Communications 12, the time to write each test is set at two hours. The English 12 and Communications 12 examinations are three hours in length to allow time for students to do the required writing and reading of selections. Students wishing to be considered for Government Scholarships write for an additional hour in each of the examinations they write other than English and Communications.

All students enrolled in the examined courses and attending a public school, a Group 1, 2 or 4 independent school [2] are required to write the Provincial examinations. Students attending Group 3 and Group 5 schools may also write these examinations upon payment of an examination fee. Altogether, approximately 87 000 regular tests and 6 500 scholarship examinations are written each year by approximately 34 000 to 35 000 and 6 000 to 7 000 students respectively.

Examinations are marked at a central location. Supply items are marked by teams of subject area teachers assembled together for a period of one to three weeks. Standard marking procedures are followed [5, p.21]. The scores from these items are then combined with the scores from the selection items, obtained through computer marking, to form the final test scores. These scores are adjusted to control for variation in examination difficulty and then converted to letter grades taking into account the quality of the papers and the distribution of letter grades awarded by the schools. Prior to their use, the grades and their distributions are reviewed and approved by the Board of Examiners.

Up through 1988/89, the provincial examination mark was combined with the school awarded mark so that each component contributed equally to the final composite or aggregate grade for each course. Starting in 1989/90, the contribution of the provincial examinations will be reduced to 40%.

The Grade 12 examination program is supervised and administered by the Student Assessment Branch, Ministry of Education under the general direction of an independent Provincial Board of Examiners. Members of the Board, appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council, include representatives of the various educational constituencies that are affected by decisions made by the Board. The teachers who set and mark the examinations are selected by the Ministry from among those who apply to serve on these committees. The yearly costs of the program are approximately 2.5 million dollars.

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[2] Effective September, 1989, new categories for independent schools were established by the Provincial Government so that they now number five [3, pp.19-20;26].

2.1 Historical Context

2.1.1 1876 — 1924

Provincial examinations in British Columbia have been in existence in one form or another since the opening of the first high school in the province. Variously called Departmental Examinations, Government Examinations, University Programme Departmental Examinations, and Provincial Examinations, the first of these was administered in March, 1876. Intended as a means to identify students who, on the basis of their test scores, were considered academically ready for high school, four subject areas were tested: arithmetic, grammar, spelling, and geography.

Prepared under the direction of John Jessop, Superintendent of Public Schools, only 68 of the 160 applicants passed. In response, Jessop, in his 1877 Annual Report, wrote,

> Teachers in old established schools must now be reminded that failures in the future to pass pupils in this competitive examination will be attributed, with but few exceptions, to inefficiency in imparting instruction, or want of attention to school duties and industry in performance of them [28, p.9].

In these early years, government examinations were used to select students for high school, monitor their subsequent progress through high school and, on the basis of the test results, to assess teacher efficiency. Further, prior to 1901, high school education was viewed as sufficient training to allow a student to become a teacher provided he or she passed a Teacher's Examination set by the Department of Education. The education system depended on a centralized authority to ensure that at least a minimum standard of achievement for teaching was obtained [4].

By 1898 this minimum standard became the primary standard by which educational achievement was judged. While previously high school principals had the authority to grant a High School Diploma, students could now only gain a Diploma by passing the annual Departmental Examinations [29].

Little in the way of criticism or expressions of dissatisfaction or concern appears to have been made during the next 20 or so years. Hindle, as part of his graduate studies in 1918, presented a review of the examination system, but it appears that it was essentially ignored or not seen [11]. It was not until 1925, when the first Royal Commission on Education in British Columbia was established, that serious reservations regarding the examination system were heard and subsequently reacted to.

2.1.2 1925 — 1959

Putman and Weir [23], in their response to a request from the provincial government in 1924 to survey the B.C. school system and provide recommendations for its improvement, recommended that, with respect to testing, students should be able to enter high school solely on the basis of the recommendation of their teachers. They pointed out that over the past 25 years the standards of teaching and teacher qualifications had improved. Further, they noted critically that the emphasis placed on examinations led teachers to train students to prepare for final tests rather than to teach the full curriculum. Other misuses included over-emphazing examination subjects and neglecting other important areas not examined. They criticized the examination system for causing undue grade retardation, and for encouraging weaker students to leave school early so that school level results would improve. They questioned the importance attached to examination results by inspectors when rating teachers.

While Putman and Weir argued against Departmental Examinations because they were based on "traditional formal subjects" and lacked "definite objectives and scientific standards of measurement" [23, p.357], they were not opposed to external examinations *per se*. They believed that the tendency of the B.C. examination system "to transform the school into a mere knowledge factory, where drill upon dull, lifeless subject matter is made an end in itself" [23, p.262] could be overcome by the use of standardized intelligence and achievement tests similar in form to those developed and administered in the United States. They commented, "The way has been opened for a notable advance in the scientific measurement of education"[23, p.43].

In 1931, teachers were granted authority to promote students from one grade to the next through Grade 11. Grade 12 students were still required to take final provincial examinations in order to graduate. Then, in 1937, high school accreditation, first recommended by Putman and Weir in their 1925 report, was implemented. With the exception of Grade 12 students who wished to enter the University of British Columbia (UBC) (a policy which the university later rescinded in 1949), students with at least a C+ standing in an examinable course and attending an accredited high school were recommended in that course. Non-recommended students and students attending non-accredited high schools were required to write and pass Departmental Examinations in order to graduate.

During the period of time leading up to the implementation of school accreditation, serious debate took place regarding the effects the then proposed change in examination policy would have on standards (for example, at the 1934 Spring Convention of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation). Many educators (e.g., King, then principal of Kitsilano and later Chief Inspector of B.C. schools) believed that standards would not be maintained unless some form of provincially administered tests was taken by all Grade 12 students. Others felt that these uniform tests would lead to the same adverse effects cited earlier for the Departmental Examinations by Putman and Weir.

The argument in favour of testing was heard more clearly. As stated above, the introduction of school accreditation did not lead to the abolition of Departmental Examinations. Additionally, beginning in 1941, achievement tests were developed and administered at other grade levels on a province-wide basis. In

1946, the new Division of Tests, Standards, and Measurements was created in the Education Ministry to oversee and administer the Grade 12 and provincial achievement testing programs.

The next major change in the Grade 12 Departmental Examinations accompanied the major curriculum revision introduced in 1946. In order that students could pursue their intellectual interests further in high school, a number of advanced elective courses were introduced in the major subject areas to form the University Programme [30]. Departmental Examinations were set for each of these electives and their prerequisite course. The preparation and marking of these examinations and the release of examination results were carried out by the Division under the general direction of a Board of Examiners comprised of university and Department representatives. Experienced public school teachers set and marked the examinations under Division supervision. Students not recommended were required to pass these examinations to receive course credit. As well, students wishing to be considered for government scholarships wrote the examinations set for the senior courses in which they were enrolled.

2.1.3 1960 — 1973

Support for examinations in B.C. is seen again in the work of the second Royal Commission on Education tabled in the Provincial Legislature in 1960 [8]. One of the reasons given by the Government for establishing the Commission in 1958 was "a prevalent opinion that Canadian education was not yielding results that were equal to those obtained in some other countries." Accordingly, the Chant Commission recommended that "the primary or general aim of the educational system of British Columbia should be that of promoting the intellectual development of the pupils and that this should be the major emphasis throughout the whole school programme" [8, pp.17-18]. Examinations were seen by the Commission as critical to meet this aim:

> Examinations would serve to divert from the regular school programme into suitable continuation courses the pupils who have reached a point in the regular programme where satisfactory progress is not maintained. .....
>
> In addition, and of at least equal importance, such examinations provide an incentive for able pupils to work harder .....
>
> Provincial examinations serve the additional purpose of establishing a more uniform standard of instruction throughout the public school system, ... [They] provide standards of achievement that emphasize the need for a thorough treatment of the basic programme of studies, without curtailing the freedom of the teachers to exploit the interests of their pupils or to adjust their instruction to local conditions. [8, pp.258-259]

However, the Commission, echoing somewhat the previous statements made by Putman and Weir (1925), believed that the examinations could be improved by including more essay-type questions that "stress the understanding of knowledge rather than the recall of items of information" [23, p.258].

The Commission Report opened the door to further changes to the examination program, culminating in 1973 when the last set of government examinations was administered. Consonant with changes in the curriculum, the University Programme Departmental Examinations at Grades 11 and 12 were phased out during 1965/66 and 66/67 and replaced with provincial examinations in the Grade 12 courses, except English 12, included in the new Academic-Technical Program. These examinations were set and marked using the same procedures followed to set and mark the University Program Examinations they replaced. To be written by non-recommended students, the marks from these examinations were combined with school marks so that each component accounted for 50% of the final mark. To better test and recognize academic excellence as suggested by the Commission, the scholarship requirements were changed so that students were required to write only two specially set examinations. In 1969 the difference between the regular Departmental Examinations and the Scholarship Examinations was further emphasized when the Departmental Examinations became entirely objective in format so that they could be directly scored by computer.

During this same time period, serious concerns were being raised about the worthwhileness of school leaving or Grade 12 examinations both in the province and elsewhere. There is evidence to suggest that this matter was discussed by the Provincial Advisory Committee on the Senior Secondary School Curriculum as early as 1965. Established in 1961 to advise and react to proposed educational policies for the province, this Committee included representatives from the BCTF, the Principal's Association, the Superintendent's Association, and the Universities. In recognition of the changes in curriculum brought about by the Chant Commission, the BCTF, in 1966, recommended that Departmental Examinations be abolished so as "to decrease the detrimental effects of external examinations on curriculum/instruction" (Resolution 10.1.1, BCTF Annual Convention, 1966). In 1969, the Federation, in a brief to the Department of Education, reiterated its call for the elimination of the regular Grade 12 examinations (on the grounds that the now entirely objective tests focussed more on the lower levels of the cognitive domain than did essay questions). The opening of two more universities in the province, expansion of the Institute of Technology, and the establishment of community colleges appear to have further contributed to the decision to phase out the provincial examinations [12, p.57]. Further, as summarized in the June 1969 issue of Education Canada , there was in Canada and elsewhere (see, for example, Lauwerys & Scanlon [13]) a general trend away from government examinations [6].

The decision to phase out examinations was announced in November, 1971. In its initial form, this decision appears to have been made in 1969 when the

Council of Public Instruction decided not to appoint new members to the Provincial Board of Examiners. The reasons for this decision were

- The functions of the external examinations themselves are less clear e.g., are they to select students for university admission? Are they to assess the effectiveness of secondary schools? Are they to determine if school graduation should be awarded? Are they to do all of these?
- The original value of external examinations is less clear as a result of major changes in procedures and requirements.
- The controversy surrounding external examinations, e.g., the BCTF opposition, the universities' concern over standards, the abolition of examinations in other provinces. [9]

Until these issues were clarified, new appointments were not to be made.

During the Spring, 1971, the Department outlined three options for the examination program and presented these to the Provincial Advisory Committee. The three options considered were

1. discontinue all Grade 12 examinations and establish a University Advisory Board to advise on admission policies;
2. institute external government examinations for all students to determine graduation; and
3. schools, working jointly with post-secondary institutions, develop a series of admission examinations which students could write if they wished to receive a statement of marks or if the post-secondary institution they wished to attend required such a statement.

Arguments in support of option 1 included saving money and recognizing that teachers were best qualified to judge whether or not their students had met graduation requirements. In opposition, questions were raised about whether or not standards would be maintained and whether or not autonomous schools would adequately prepare students for higher learning? Correspondingly, control of standards and courses and the belief that all students should be expected to meet a common set of standards were advanced in support of option 2. Arguments against the second option were costs, impracticality of examining all subjects in a reliable and valid manner, and undue reliance on a single set of examinations. With option 3, the second of the two concerns raised with respect to option 1 was addressed by the introduction of special admissions tests [9].

Later in 1971, the Minister of Education announced that the regular Departmental Examinations were to end but that the scholarship examinations would continue for the "time being". At the same time, the Department studied the development of a standard scholastic achievement test which would be accepted by the three provincial universities and would, ostensibly, take the place of the government scholarship examinations.

The last set of regular Departmental Examinations was administered in 1973. The scholastic achievement test was not developed.

2.1.4 1974 — 1983

With the elimination of the regular examinations in 1973, the Ministry of Education recognized the need to monitor achievement in education in some other way [14]. Two programs were introduced: the Provincial Learning Assessment Programme in 1976/77 and the Classroom Achievement Test Program in 1980.

Created following consultation with the Joint Committee on Evaluation established to advise the Ministry on the need for a provincial assessment program and the procedures to be followed to conduct an assessment, province-wide assessments were introduced to provide:

- provincial, district, and, beginning in 1982, school level data describing present achievement levels and changes in these levels over time,
- direction for curriculum revision and development and for pre-service and in-service teacher education, and
- direction for the allocation of resources by the Ministry of Education.

Subject areas in the curriculum were assessed according to a cycle set up by the Student Assessment Branch in cooperation with the Curriculum Development Branch. Teams of consultants, under contract to the Ministry and typically composed of university experts in the subject being assessed, teachers familiar with the curriculum in the subject area, and specialists in measurement and research design and analysis, designed and carried out each year's assessment. Generally, all students were tested at each of the grade levels involved, usually Grades 4, 8, and 12, with one of the three forms constructed for that grade. However, pupil level results were not reported. Provincial Interpretation Panels, set up by the Ministry and composed of parents, representatives of business and professional communities, and educators, examined provincial results to determine whether the observed performance levels were or were not satisfactory [25].

Classroom Achievement Tests were introduced to assist teachers in:

1. assigning final letter grades that are consistent with other teachers in the province, and
2. diagnosing student strengths and weaknesses.

Each test was accompanied by a set of provincial norms and standards of performance to be used by teachers when interpreting their students' test results.

By 1983, there were 26 Classroom Achievement Tests in several subject areas from Grades 3 to 12. Used voluntarily, over 750,000 copies of these tests were ordered during the 1982/83 school year.

In addition to the Assessment Program and Classroom Achievement Tests, the Ministry continued with the Grade 12 Scholarship Program for students who wished to write for post-secondary academic scholarships. Interested students were required to write examinations, set by the Ministry of Education, in English Composition and at least three other academic Grade 12 courses.

Despite the existence of these assessment and testing programs, the issue of Grade 12 examinations lingered in the background. Those who favoured the return of Grade 12 examinations still argued that provincial examinations were necessary to ensure that a consistent and high level of academic achievement was maintained. There appeared to be growing public support for this argument. Based upon its survey, the Canadian Education Association (1979) reported that Canada-wide, 40.0% of the public felt that, in comparison to schools in their day, standards had worsened. In British Columbia, more that half (53.9%) expressed the same feeling [7, p.15]. As reported in Ministry of Education documents made available to the this study team [16], government sponsored polls seemed to suggest that the public was strongly in favour of the use of government examinations as a way to reverse the decline of educational standards and improve the value of the Grade 12 graduation diploma. Universities expressed concerns about what they perceived to be declining standards, citing data which suggested high school grades were weak predictors of university success, and that there were major inconsistencies between ways teachers graded students, i.e., an "A" in one classroom or school is equivalent to a "C+" in another classroom or school.

Concerned with what he perceived to be declining standards, the Minister of Education announced in November 1982 that province-wide examinations would be administered at the end of the 1982/83 school year. In making this announcement, he suggested that these examinations would test not only students but also measure the "effectiveness of their teachers and schools" (Vancouver Sun, November 15,1982, p.A.7) and "increase the confidence of students, parents, and the general public in the status of high school graduation" [31, p.19].

In contrast to the apparent public and university support for provincial examinations, both the B.C School Trustee's Association (BCSTA) and the BCTF expressed opposition to the return of provincial examinations. Neither organization had been consulted regarding the examinations to be administered in June, 1983.

Only a limited version of the full examination program was to be implemented in the first year. Since Grade 12 classroom achievement tests for English 12, Algebra 12, and Chemistry 12 had been developed at part of the Classroom Achievement Test Program, testing in the first year was to limited to these three subject areas. (Tests for the remaining Grade 12 courses were to be developed in subsequent years.) However, prior to June, 1983, the new Minister of Education (there having been a provincial election in which the previous Minister of Education did not seek re-election) reviewed the plans for the administration and use of the examinations and concluded that there were too many unresolved problems to require that the results be included as part of the students' final grades. Instead, the results were to be used to help teachers and district officials identify strengths and weaknesses in the three areas tested. Teachers could, if they wished, use the test scores to form part of the final grades of their students.

2.1.5 1984 — Present

The call for the re-introduction of province-wide Grade 12 examinations by the Minister of Education in 1982 was somewhat in step with what was happening in other jurisdictions at that time. In contrast to the situation in the late 1960s when, as described earlier, there was a general trend away from government and external tests, the trend in the late 1970s into the 1980s was toward testing. Briefly, parents concerned with the progress of their own children and educators responsible for the provision and delivery of quality educational programs expressed uneasiness about the ability of the schools to adequately meet the needs of students and to prepare students for what can best be described as a rapidly emerging technological and information society.

This trend for new and expanded testing reflected what might best be called a theme for greater accountability. Such a theme was made evident in public and professional support for standards, examinations, and a desire to monitor student performance. Politicians responsible for allocating funds for education wanted to know if they were getting their money's worth and turned to testing as the way to find out.

There were, though, expressions of concern similar in tone and content to those expressed by Putman and Weir in 1925, and again during the 1960s: teachers are under mounting pressure to "teach to the test"; the curriculum is being "narrowed"; students are enrolling in "higher status examined" courses rather than "lower status nonexamined" courses; higher order thinking skills are not and cannot be assessed using present tests; instructional time is reduced in favour of test preparation time; teacher professionalism is undermined; assignment of teachers on the basis of their ability to prepare their students for these tests; teachers and students experience high levels of stress and anxiety; and testing is not cost effective, for example.

Yet, despite these concerns, large education reforms of the past few years have incorporated either the use of new tests or the expanded use of existing ones. In Britain, for example, new national tests are a key tool in the Government's effort to enact far-reaching changes in that nation's education system. Central to this reform is a unified national curriculum backed by a series of tests administered to children at the ages of 7, 11, 14, and 16. It its recent deliberations about the bill to re-authorize federal spending for elementary and secondary education programs, the U. S. Senate added an amendment that calls for a substantial expansion and reshaping of the National Assessment of Educational Assessment. The stated purpose of the Senate amendment is "to improve the effectiveness of our Nation's schools by making objective information about student performance in an expanded variety of learning areas (reading, writing, mathematics, science, history, geography, and civics) available to policy-makers at the national, regional, State, and local levels" (H 5 EAS, sec. 9002). This purpose closely parallels the statements of purpose that can be found in the rash of legislation mandating new or expanded testing enacted in various states over the last five years in response to the somewhat scathing indictment of American schools by the National Commission on Excellence in Education [21]. Petrie summarized this situation by indication that it is not "too much of an exaggeration to say that evaluation and testing have become the engine for implementing educational policy" [22, p.175].

It was in this general context that the Minister of Education announced at the beginning of the 1983/84 school year that Grade 12 Departmental Examinations would be administered annually on a province-wide basis beginning in January 1984 in semestered schools and in all schools in June 1984. Three reasons were advanced by the Minister of Education for this decision:

> Firstly, our government believes strongly that students graduating from our high schools should be achieving challenging standards that are consistent across the province. ....
>
> Secondly, a graduate applying for admission to a college or university should be assured of being treated equitably in the admissions process and that high school marks will be taken at face value. ....
>
> Finally, we introduce testing to reassure the public that we are serious about quality in our schools. ... [10, p.59].

The Provincial Board of Examiners, appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor in Council to oversee the examination program, stated the objectives as follows in its 1984 report:

1. to ensure that the prescribed curricula are being followed;
2. to provide a stimulus and a challenge to students;
3. to provide a standardized reporting of achievement, allowing teachers to assess the achievement of their own students in relation to standards across the province; and
4. to provide post-secondary institutions with an impartial and reliable reference for making decisions on admissions.

While not at variance with the objectives as stated in the Ministry announcement of the program and quoted on the first page of the present report, nor with those of the Minister of Education quoted above, the statement of the Board revealed that the examination program was being used in a monitoring role with respect to the teaching of the curriculum. Further evidence of this intent can be seen in newspaper reports of the Minister's announcement of the examination program in which he is quoted as listing as an objective of the program "to ensure curriculum guidelines are adhered to where applicable."

Seemingly, the re-introduction of Grade 12 provincial examinations was essentially a political decision. Based on Ministry documents made available to the study team and interviews with key Ministry officials, there was no pressure from within the system for such examinations. Consultation and discussion on the structure and components of the program appeared to be limited to Ministry staff. Predictably, then, the BCTF, many teachers, and other educators initially expressed opposition to their introduction (see the B.C. Teacher, November-December, 1983). Others called for appropriate consultation and an examination of the proposed provincial examination structure (see, for example, B.C. Principals' and Vice-Principals' Association [2]). It appears that this initial resistance has gradually waned and that the examinations have gained wider acceptance. Two out of three teachers who participated in the Let's Talk About Schools (LTAS) study in 1985 suggested there should be province-wide examinations [18]; since the beginning of the examination program, more than 2200 different teachers have been involved in the development and marking of the examinations [5, p.21].

The re-introduction of the Grade 12 examinations appears to have been well received by the general public, and by business and industry. Slightly more that 75% of the individual general public and group respondents to LTAS supported province-wide examinations.

In 1987, the Provincial Government established the third Royal Commission on Education in the province "to clearly evaluate where we are going in education and to select the most appropriate and cost-effective means of meeting our objectives" [19]. Broadly defined, these objectives were seen as developing a population that is "well prepared to meet the rapidly changing challenges of everyday life in the 21st century", "highly motivated to learn and to develop personal skills and creative potential to the maximum extent possible," and "well prepared to rationally and maturely evaluate options at both the personal and community levels." In it's response, *A Legacy for Learners* [27], the Commission formulated 83 recommendations dealing with curriculum and assessment, teacher supply and qualifications, education finance, and system governance.

With specific reference to assessment, the Commission did not find a ground swell of opinion against the provincial examination program in the submissions it received from the general public, students, business and industry, and education professionals. There were, though, some recurring issues brought to the Commission's attention. The most common of these, raised by proponents as well as opponents of the program, concerned the weight given to a student's score on the provincial examination, as opposed to the grade awarded by the school, in arriving at that student's final grade for a course. Typically, those who raised this issue indicated that the weight should be reduced from 50% to 40%. Related somewhat to weighting, concerns were raised about differences between school based marks and those obtained on a provincial examination. To what extent should these two marks agree? Some were of the opinion that there should be strong agreement between the two; instances of teachers being asked, either explicitly or implicitly, to explain the discrepancy between the mark they awarded and the examination mark were drawn to the Commission's attention. Others suggested that since the two marks do not reflect performances referenced to the same learning outcomes, it is reasonable to expect differences. (For example, the provincial examinations in sciences do not have a laboratory component requiring the students to perform an experiment; the French 12 examination did not previously include an oral component.) Additionally, concerns were raised that the content of the examination unduly influenced the curriculum, that teachers teach only what is considered likely to be tested, and that the examinations were focussed on the recall of factual material and application of routine algorithmic procedures.

During the time of the Commission's study, the Auditor-General released the Audits of the Government for 1987. As part of this audit, the Auditor-General commented on various programs of the Ministry of Education. With respect to the Grade 12 examination program and the specific issue of agreement between the examination and the school based marks, the Auditor-General commented:

> It was generally acknowledged to us that the Grade 12 examinations cannot cover all intended outcomes. The classroom mark presents an opportunity for the teacher to assess student progress toward the less measurable intended outcomes, and the teacher is in the best position to make this kind of assessment. However, the Ministry does not provide teachers with the guidelines regarding the basis for classroom marks. Also, the Ministry does not gather any information on how the marks are arrived at. The pattern across the province is that the classroom marks correspond to the results of the provincial examination. This would suggest that teachers base their results on the same group of outcomes as the examinations [1, p.32].

Accordingly, the Auditor-General recommended:

> ...that the Ministry create guidelines on which Grade 12 teachers can base their classroom marks. The guidelines should stress the need to evaluate outcomes that cannot be tested in formal examinations [1, p.32].

Concerning the influence of the examinations on the breadth of the curriculum, the Auditor-General found that:

> Many of the people we interviewed felt that the Grade 12 examinations had led to a narrowing of the way curriculum is taught in

> the schools. They suspected that teachers were ignoring important aspects of the curriculum in training their students for the examinations. Most interviewees recognized the need for the examinations, but felt that they should be re-designed to reflect the intended outcomes of the curriculum more fully [1, p.33],

and recommended that:

> the Ministry review the Grade 12 examinations to determine their effect on curriculum and teaching practices [1, p.33].

The Royal Commission's curriculum research team was of the opinion that these concerns expressed to the Commission and those identified by the Auditor-General could be effectively addressed [24, p.23], and suggested that "the current Grade 12 examination programme be replaced by one in which each student would write four examinations to meet graduation requirements: English, Humanities and Fine Arts, Sciences, and Practical Arts" [24, p.49]. [3]

However, following its analysis of learning and teaching functions and activities and the submissions received by the Commission, the Commission's research team responsible for the learners argued that "the learners of British Columbia would be better served if the Provincial Examinations were eliminated" [15, p.103] and replaced with an "emphasis on classroom practices that used criterion-referenced evaluation" [15, p.106].

The Commission, in it's final analysis, recommended "that provincial Grade 12 examinations be extended to all subject areas and that those examinations count for one-third of the student's Grade 12 marks" [27, p.108].

In response to this recommendation, the Provincial Government decided to continue the Grade 12 examination program, and to expand it to include all Grade 12 courses in the Humanities and Sciences. To give greater emphasis to teachers' assessment of performance in these courses, and starting with the 1989-90 school year, the weight of these examinations will be reduced to 40% in the calculation of final course marks. Scholarships will continue to be awarded on the basis of performance on special scholarship examinations [3, pp.14-15].

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[3] In its recommendations related to the curriculum, the Commission established, for Grades 1 to 10, a common provincial curriculum organized in terms of four subject categories:

1. Humanities (English, Social Studies, French);
2. Fine Arts (Music, Art, Dance, Theatre);
3. Sciences (Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics); and
4. Practical Arts (Physical Education, Industrial Education, Home Economics, Lifespan Education) [27, pp.94-99].

For Grades 11 and 12, the Commission advocated multiple programs leading toward graduation. These included a core program comprised of English, History, and Science, Technology and the Environment, and which all students would complete; a general academic program to be completed by students wanting to pursue post-secondary education, including university admission; and a series of alternative programs for students wishing to pursue particular career areas and who wish to mix both schooling and work [27, pp.104-106].

2.2 Purposes of the Present Study

Despite the endorsement of Grade 12 examinations by the most recent Royal Commission, and the policy of the Ministry of Education to continue and expand these examinations, albiet with a reduced weight, there are still those who question this use of tests. For example, two of the advisory research teams to the Royal Commission disagreed on the continued use of Grade 12 examinations. The Auditor-General of British Columbia has raised questions about discrepancies between examination and teacher marks and the narrowing of the curriculum brought about by the Grade 12 examinations, and recommended that the Ministry review the Grade 12 examination program to determine its impact on curriculum and teaching practices. Further, there is continual debate in this province between those who see provincial Grade 12 examinations as the means of ensuring graduating standards that are challenging and consistent across the province and those who point out the shortcomings and adverse effects of such examinations.

Accordingly, the purpose of the present study was to:

> *investigate the impacts of the provincial Grade 12 examinations upon students, parents, teachers, school and school district administrators, post-secondary administrators, employers of high school graduates, and Ministry of Education officials; and upon the curriculum, teaching practice, and school administration at the class, school, district, and provincial levels at Grade 12 and lower grades.*

Chapter 3

Design of the Project

This study of the impact of the British Columbia Provincial Examination Program was initiated in May, 1989. Initial considerations of the magnitude and complexity of the program resulted in designing a multi-method, multi-source study. The study was designed to focus on perceptions of stake-holders in the Examination Program rather than attempt to investigate more tangible indicators of impact such as drop-out rates or general ability measures of graduating students. This decision was influenced by the relevance and accessibility of information on participant perception and the general lack of accurate and meaningful baseline indicator data.

To ensure that the study was directed toward a comprehensive set of appropriate and meaningful questions, the first steps of the study were directed toward identifying and clarifying the issues to be addressed in a wide scale collection of data. This resulted in an extensive investigation of the context in which the examination program was developed and the range of variables which may have been influenced by the Examinations Program. The study involved three major steps: document review, instrumentation, and provincial survey.

3.1 Document Review

The document review was conducted as an initial step to identify the intentions behind the introduction of the Provincial Examination Program in 1983/84. Newspapers, journals, published and unpublished papers, and government documents were reviewed. The majority of documents, memoranda, and position papers retrieved from the Ministry of Education files were related to the rationale for the program, implementation options, and various issues brought to the attention of the Ministry by those in favour of a province-wide testing program and those opposed. The information obtained from this review and analysis provided an overview of context for the Provincial Examination Program and served to underpin the initial design of the data collection from active participants in the program.

The preceding chapter of this report was based upon the findings of the document review. The document review also yielded the Intentions section of the questionnaires administered in the provincial survey.

3.2 Instrumentation

Separate survey questionnaires and/or interview protocols were constructed for students, parents, teachers, principals, counsellors and superintendents. Employers and officers of post-secondary institutions were surveyed through interviews only.

A design principle used was to aim for maximum overlap of questions from one respondent group to another. Since, as illustrated in the previous section of this report, it was likely that different individuals would have varying perceptions of the program and its effects, cross-checking of the reported perceptions was considered essential. Consequently, common questions across respondent groups were formulated where possible to permit comparisons. Differences in questions reflected differences in perspective anticipated among respondent groups. Parents, for example, would have a point of view centred on their child as a student in the educational system and would likely lack the depth and detail of knowledge, and familiarity with schooling that either students or teachers possess.

The first step in developing these instruments was to identify and clarify the major elements of schooling most likely to be influenced by the Examination Program. The initial listing of elements (Appendix A) was gleaned from the Ministry documents including the reports of the Royal Commission [27] and the Auditor-General [1], and from impact studies conducted in other jurisdictions (eg., Nagy, Traub, and MacRury, 1986 [20]).

The comprehensiveness of these initial descriptions were checked against the perceptions of those most directly involved with the Provincial Examination Program: grade 12 students, grade 12 teachers, and high school principals in a small pilot study. Research team members visited seven secondary schools in the province (Table 3.1) to interview students, teachers, counsellors, principals, and superintendents using protocols developed from the preliminary impact descriptions.

The results of these interviews (Appendix B) coupled with the findings of the document review served as the basis for the formulation of the survey and interview forms used in the main study.

Table 3.1: Schools Involved in Instrumentation Interviews

School	Location
St. Andrew's	Victoria
Kelly Road	Prince George
Mackenzie Secondary	MacKenzie
Queen Charlotte	Queen Charlotte City
G.M.Dawson	Masset
Columneetza	Williams Lake
Belmont	Sooke

3.2.1 Survey Forms

The survey forms (questionnaires) were developed on the basis of the identified elements of schooling which were most likely to be influenced by the Examination Program. However, it became apparent from the responses of the students, teachers and principals interviewed in the pilot study, that the magnitude of possible changes brought about by the Examination Program and the perceived effect were viewed as distinct, and that this distinction could provide significant insight into the various impacts of the Examination Program. Some changes were viewed by the respondents as quite large yet the effect upon the schools was minimal, whereas other changes, regardless of magnitude, were viewed as having a major effect. Therefore, to capture these two dimensions, the survey questionnaires for each respondent group were designed to obtain both a measure of change and an assessment of whether this change was beneficial or detrimental to the schools. For the change dimension a four or five point scale was used to obtain a measure of the magnitude of change perceived. To obtain an assessment of the effect of this change a five point scale was used. For example, students were asked to respond to the following item:

Compared to previous years in school, the stress I feel about school is . . .

CHANGE					EFFECT				
Much Worse		No Change		Much Better	Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial
1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5

Items dealing with related elements, such as utilization of examination results and teaching practices, were presented together in separate sub-sections. For each item, respondents were asked to first consider the magnitude of change brought about by the introduction of the Provincial Examination Program and then the effect of this change.

In addition to responding to the Likert-type items, respondents were also invited to provide written comments in a section provided on the last page of each questionnaire. They were encouraged to add elements which they found missing, to identify particular strengths and weaknesses of the Examination Program, and to make general comments in regard to the Examination Program.

The questionnaires were field tested in September, 1989 using a small sample of convenience of students, teachers and administrators. The results of the field tests were used as the basis for the final revision of the instruments.

To further test the functional nature of the questionnaires and to check for trends in the open ended sections of the instruments, focus groups were established in different areas of the province to respond to these issues and provide added perspective. In each of five school districts (Campbell River, Coquitlam, Peace River South, Prince George and Victoria), four focus groups were formed: students, parents, teachers, and administrators. Each focus group consisted of five individuals. Participants were asked to complete the appropriate questionnaire prior to the group meeting so as to ensure their familiarity with the questionnaire and its content. A member of the research team then met with each focus group independently for a two hour session.

The field testing and the focus group procedure suggested that the questionnaires were thorough in their coverage and easy to respond to. Based on suggestions arising from participants, minor revisions were incorporated in the final forms of the instruments. Copies of the final form of the six survey instruments are provided in Appendices C to H.

3.2.2 Interview Guides

One of the stated intentions of the Provincial Examination Program is to enhance the equity of treatment of high school graduates by employers in hiring decisions, and by colleges and universities in admissions decisions. To investigate the extent to which this intention was being met, a sample of employers and post-secondary admissions officers was interviewed by telephone. In addition, other issues related to the Examination Program were discussed in the interview. Copies of these interview guides are contained in Appendix I for employers and Appendix J for post-secondary officials.

3.3 Respondents

3.3.1 School Personnel

The key locus of examination impact was viewed as the school — the students, parents, teachers, counsellors, and administrators involved with the Grade 12 program.

The questionnaires were distributed to grade 12 students, the parents of grade 12 students, the teachers of grade 12 students, school counsellors, high school principals, and district superintendents. The distribution was conducted through school district offices. Packages of questionnaires were shipped to each school district in British Columbia. From the district office the packages were sent to every school enrolling grade 12 students. The school packages contained questionnaires for the principal, two counsellors, and all grade 12 teachers, as well as questionnaires for grade 12 students and parents. A systematic sampling of grade 12 classes was conducted and selected schools received one or two (depending on total school enrollment) class sets of student and parent questionnaires. The Principal was requested to give the class sets to the first (and second when necessary) English 12 or Communications 12 class of the week. The students completed the questionnaires in class and were asked to take the parent questionnaire home, have it completed, and return it to the school. All questionnaires were individually packaged to maintain confidentiality. Materials were returned to the principals for collection and return to the research team.

Due to this method of distribution, the exact return rate of questionnaires cannot be determined. However, of the total number of questionnaires sent out, over 50% were returned. Actual numbers of returns for each group may be found in Table 4.1.

3.3.2 Employer and Post-Secondary Officials

The sample of employers selected for the study is listed in Table 4.26 and the interview schedule used is included in Appendix I. In identifying the employer sample, attention was paid to the breadth of coverage of various business and industrial sectors in the Province, and to the extent to which the employer would likely hire large numbers of high school graduates. An initial interview of Employment Canada, Labour Statistics Division, provided guidance in this endeavour.

The sample of post-secondary admissions officers interviewed is listed in Table 4.27 and the actual interview schedule is included in Appendix J. The questions used in the interview addressed the issues of the criteria used for admission and the specific use made of the provincial examination results.

Chapter 4

Findings of the Project

This chapter reports the interpretation of the data collected from questionnaires, interviews and focus group sessions. Table 4.1 reports the numbers of questionnaires for each group on which the tabled data in this chapter are based.

Table 4.1: Numbers of Questionnaire Returns

Group	Number of Returns
Students	1833
Parents	608
Teachers	947
Principals	160
Counsellors	137
Superintendents	35

When interpreting the data from this study, the research team followed a procedure that examined both response means and distributions, as well as the anecdotal data from comments, interviews, and focus groups.

The use of response means serves to reduce the data on each item to a single value which can, for the purposes of this study be interpreted as follows:

- *On a 5-point scale* (change or effect), a value of 3.0 is considered to be the mid-point — generally speaking that the respondents, as a group, perceived no change or effect.
- *on a 4-point scale* (frequency), a value of 2.5 is considered to be the mid-point.
- *On a 3-point scale* (extent), a value of 2.0 is considered to be the mid-point and would be described according to the category label.

Although differences needed to be statistically significant varied from group to group, it was considered by the research team that a difference from the mid-point of 0.20 or more was always statistically significant, but more importantly, should be considered an educationally significant change or effect as perceived by the respondent group.

All tabled data in this chapter are mean responses to the questions on the survey forms. Percentage distributions of responses, due to their complexity do not form part of this chapter, but are included in Appendices C through H. Readers should be reminded that mean responses can be obtained in many ways. As an example, a mean of 3.00 for the effect of a given condition (indicating no *overall* or *general* effect) can be obtained if everyone responds "3" (indicating a perception of no effect), but can also be obtained if half the respondents answer "1" (indicating a perception of very detrimental effect) and the other half responds "5" (indicating a perception of very beneficial effect). A better understanding of the data may be obtained by examining both the tabled means in this chapter and the distributions reported in Appendices C through H.

Readers should also be reminded that the use of summary statistics such as means and distributions only provides an indication of an "overall" trend or a "general" pattern. The Provincial Examination Program not only has effects and implications for the general population, but also has substantial effects on individuals; it is a "high stakes" program for individual people. Examining general trends, which might be interpreted from the total data as having "no overall effect", does not provide an awareness and appreciation of the major effects the program can have on particular students or small groups. Reading the questionnaire comments made by individuals (included in Section 4.7 at the end of this chapter), and perusing the interview transcripts (included in Appendix B and Appendix K) will give the reader a better understanding of the serious effects and consequences the Provincial Examination Program can have, and has had, on particular individuals.

4.1 Intentions of the Provincial Examination Program

As previously described, there were several stated intentions of the reintroduction of the provincial examinations. All respondent groups were asked about their perceptions regarding the extent to which these intentions have been satisfied (1=not at all, 2=to some extent, and 3=yes, definitely), and the resulting impact on education (1=very detrimental to 5=very beneficial). Student and parent mean responses are reported in Table 4.2, teacher and principal mean responses are presented in Table 4.3, and Table 4.4 displays the mean responses of counsellors and superintendents.

The results indicate that the Provincial Examination Program has led to a

Table 4.2: Intentions: Student and Parent Responses (response means)

	Students		Parents	
INTENTION	Extent	Effect	Extent	Effect
1. Has the exam program led to more equitable treatment of students applying for ...				
UNIVERSITY?	1.98	3.21	2.01	3.43
COLLEGE?	1.93	3.22	2.01	3.41
EMPLOYMENT?	1.65	3.06	1.55	3.11
2. Is the provincial curriculum being followed more closely?	2.29	3.25	2.20	3.28
3. Are students provided with additional challenge?	2.17	3.29	2.05	3.32
4. Do teachers have enhanced confidence in their own abilities in curriculum and evaluation?	1.92	3.17	1.74	2.96
5. Has the status of the teaching profession been enhanced?	1.65	3.00	1.48	2.79

Change:	1=not at all	Effect:	1=very detrimental
	2=to some extent		3=no effect
	3=yes,definitely		5=very beneficial

beneficial change in the perceived equitable treatment of students applying for entrance into University. To a lesser extent, this benefit also applies to College entrance. However, there is little perceived change in the use of examination results for application for employment. When employers were approached for comment, they indicated that they mainly looked for a High School Diploma and not at marks from individual courses (see Appendix I).

The results also clearly indicate that the respondents feel that the Provincial Curriculum is being followed more closely and that this change is viewed as beneficial. The principals and superintendents had the highest rating for the beneficial effects of the Examination Program in regard to increasing adherence to the provincial curriculum.

It is generally perceived that students are being provided with additional challenge by the examination program. The students, however, report that the challenges are greater than those perceived by the other respondents. The principals and the superintendents felt that this was much more beneficial than did the parents, students and teachers. The counsellors felt that the increased challenge was neither beneficial nor detrimental.

In regard to the Examination Program enhancing the confidence of teachers in the areas of curriculum and instruction, all respondent groups were consistent

Table 4.3: Intentions: Teacher and Principal Responses (response means)

	Teachers		Principals	
INTENTION	Extent	Effect	Extent	Effect
1. Has the exam program led to more equitable treatment of students applying for ...				
UNIVERSITY?	1.89	3.39	1.98	3.58
COLLEGE?	1.84	3.34	1.88	3.55
EMPLOYMENT?	1.43	3.06	1.29	3.02
2. Is the provincial curriculum being followed more closely?	2.49	3.43	2.56	3.65
3. Are students provided with additional challenge?	1.82	3.14	2.12	3.69
4. Do teachers have enhanced confidence in their own abilities in curriculum and evaluation?	1.64	3.04	1.84	3.55
5. Has the status of the teaching profession been enhanced?	1.28	2.60	1.52	3.21

Change: 1=not at all
2=to some extent
3=yes,definitely

Effect: 1=very detrimental
3=no effect
5=very beneficial

in describing the program as having some limited achievement of this intention. The respondents had a mixed reaction with regard to the effect of this change. The principals and the superintendents perceive this change as being beneficial, whereas the other respondents, on the average, perceive this change as being neither detrimental or beneficial.

The respondents rated the achievement of the program in relation to enhancing the status of the teaching profession on the low side, with teachers and counsellor ratings approaching "not at all". The effect of this change is viewed as detrimental by the counsellors, teachers and parents; as neutral by the students and superintendents; and as beneficial by the principals.

In summary, the Provincial Examination Program is perceived to have been successful in providing a more equitable treatment of students applying for university and college entrance. In addition, the provincial curriculum is perceived as being more closely followed. The examinations are also seen as providing added challenge to the students. While there has been some been some enhancement in the confidence the teachers have in their own ability in matters of curriculum and evaluation, there is a mixed reaction as to whether or not this change has been beneficial. The examination program has had limited success in providing more equitable treatment for students applying for jobs and in

Table 4.4: Intentions: Counsellor and Superintendent Responses (response means)

INTENTION	Counsellors Extent	Counsellors Effect	Superintendents Extent	Superintendents Effect
1. Has the exam program led to more equitable treatment of students applying for ...				
UNIVERSITY?	1.76	3.38	1.62	3.35
COLLEGE?	1.55	3.19	1.61	3.26
EMPLOYMENT?	1.13	3.01	1.17	3.04
2. Is the provincial curriculum being followed more closely?	2.52	3.16	2.39	3.59
3. Are students provided with additional challenge?	1.82	3.07	1.84	3.31
4. Do teachers have enhanced confidence in their own abilities in curriculum and evaluation?	1.65	3.06	1.59	3.23
5. Has the status of the teaching profession been enhanced?	1.28	2.59	1.40	3.03

Change:		Effect:	
	1=not at all		1=very detrimental
	2=to some extent		3=no effect
	3=yes,definitely		5=very beneficial

enhancing the status of the teaching profession. In fact, parents, teachers and counsellors view the examination program as having a somewhat detrimental effect on the status of the teaching profession.

4.2 Effects on Students

A number of questions asked respondents to give their views of the effects the examination program has had on students. Table 4.5 presents the mean responses of students and parents, and Tables 4.6 and 4.7 display the mean responses of teachers, principals, counsellors and superintendents. Effects that were considered included student stress, motivation, responsibility, and morale; student relationships with their teachers; student participation in school-based extracurricular activities; student part-time employment; student workload; student preparation for examinations; and student level of achievement.

Table 4.5: Effects on Students: Student and Parent Responses (response means)

	Students		Parents	
EFFECT	Change	Effect	Change	Effect
1. The stress upon students is now ...	4.04	2.14	4.17	2.31
2. Grade 12 students' motivation to learn is now ...	3.69	3.62	3.49	3.45
3. Students' sense of responsibility is now ...	4.03	3.90	3.53	3.40
4. The morale of students is now ...	3.25	3.23	n.a.	n.a.
5. My morale is now ...	3.51	3.47	n.a.	n.a.
6. My relationship with my teachers is now ...	3.70	3.70	n.a.	n.a.
7. Participation in:				
a. School sports is now ...	3.20	3.21	2.89	3.03
b. Drama is now ...	2.91	3.03	2.86	3.07
c. Music is now ...	2.87	3.03	2.91	3.07
d. School government is now ...	2.99	3.12	2.83	2.99
e. School clubs is now ...	2.92	3.07	2.72	2.95
f. Part-time employment is now ...	3.50	3.00	3.46	3.00
g. Study groups is now ...	3.05	3.27	3.05	3.29
8. Amount of homework is now ...	4.05	3.75	3.59	2.01
9. Use of out-of-school tutors is now ...	2.66	3.00	3.49	3.29

Change:	1=much less	Effect:	1=very detrimental
	3=no change		3=no effect
	5=much greater		5=very beneficial
n.a.	not applicable		

Taken as a whole, the results reported in Tables 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7 reveal that, despite higher levels of student stress, student motivation to learn and student sense of responsibility for learning have not been adversely affected by the Provincial Examination Program. Rather, the responses, especially those

Table 4.6: Effects on Students: Teacher and Principal Responses (response means)

EFFECT	Teachers		Principals	
	Change	Effect	Change	Effect
1. The stress upon students is now ...	4.17	2.55	4.20	2.54
2. Grade 12 students' motivation to learn is now ...	3.24	3.21	3.45	3.38
3. Students' sense of responsibility is now ...	3.42	3.36	3.39	3.37
4. The morale of grade 12 students is now ...	2.72	2.68	2.82	2.77
5. The morale of all students is now ...	2.87	2.84	3.00	3.03
6. Participation in:				
a. School sports is now ...	2.81	2.69	2.86	2.79
b. Drama is now ...	2.82	2.70	2.87	2.82
c. Music is now ...	2.84	2.71	2.78	2.72
d. School government is now ...	2.86	2.81	2.89	2.85
e. School clubs is now ...	2.75	2.69	2.86	2.90
f. Part-time employment is now ...	3.02	2.68	2.94	2.86
g. Study groups is now ...	3.40	3.36	3.53	3.49
7. Workload of grade 12 students is now ...	3.96	2.89	3.98	3.05
8. Achievement of grade 12 students is now ...	3.20	3.17	3.39	3.38
9. The test-wiseness of grade 12 students is now ...	3.63	3.34	3.95	3.78
10. Use of out-of-school tutors is now ...	3.61	3.36	3.74	3.53
11. Student participation in summer school is now ...	3.29	3.04	3.30	3.07

Change:		Effect:	
	1=much less		1=very detrimental
	3=no change		3=no effect
	5=much greater		5=very beneficial

of the students, suggest that these two conditions for learning have improved.[1] While this sentiment was not shared by others, the students in the present study further expressed that their morale and relationships with their teachers are also improved over previous years in school.

The findings further suggest that the Provincial Examination Program, in general, has had minimal effect upon student participation in extra-curricular activities and part-time employment. While the students and parents reported an increase in part-time work, it is difficult simply to ascribe this increase to the introduction of the provincial examinations. It is more likely that this increase is an age-related phenomenon.

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[1] In a separate study of the nature and impact of test-wiseness on the performance of Grade 12 students on provincial examinations conducted in May and June, 1989 [26], the responses of 788 Grade 12 students revealed a high level of achievement motivation, somewhat positive study habits, and strong evidence of test-wiseness. These findings agree with those reported here for the same or related variables.

Table 4.7: Effects on Students: Counsellor and Superintendent Responses (response means)

EFFECT	Counsellors		Superintendents	
	Change	Effect	Change	Effect
1. The stress upon students is now ...	4.40	2.11	3.88	2.61
2. Grade 12 students' motivation to learn is now ...	3.20	3.09	3.38	3.39
3. Students' sense of responsibility is now ...	3.31	3.31	3.41	3.48
4. The morale of grade 12 students is now ...	2.61	2.54	3.06	3.00
5. The morale of all students is now ...	2.79	2.73	3.06	3.06
6. Participation in:				
a. School sports is now ...	2.78	2.56	2.94	2.85
b. Drama is now ...	2.85	2.69	2.84	2.79
c. Music is now ...	2.79	2.61	2.84	2.70
d. School government is now ...	2.88	2.75	2.91	2.91
e. School clubs is now ...	2.85	2.64	2.91	2.94
f. Part-time employment is now ...	3.00	2.60	3.00	2.91
g. Study groups is now ...	3.47	3.37	3.59	3.53
7. Workload of grade 12 students is now ...	3.91	2.81	3.72	3.00
8. Achievement of grade 12 students is now ...	3.20	3.02	3.25	3.21
9. The test-wiseness of grade 12 students is now ...	3.77	3.43	3.84	3.66
10. Use of out-of-school tutors is now ...	3.71	3.30	3.66	3.31
11. Student participation in summer school is now ...	3.38	3.03	3.30	3.03

Change:		Effect:	
	1=much less		1=very detrimental
	3=no change		3=no effect
	5=much greater		5=very beneficial

Generally, the respondents felt that, due to the provincial examinations, the workloads of the Grade 12 students are now greater. Interestingly, while the students felt this increase benefits them, their parents are somewhat less positive. The teachers, principals, and superintendents are more neutral. Counsellors rated the increase as somewhat detrimental, but this lower rating may be explained by their interaction with students who experience problems in school.

Both the students and their parents see little change in the students' participation in in-school study groups, while teachers, principals, counsellors, and superintendents indicated there is a beneficial increase. Regarding out-of-school tutors, students reported that they are using tutors less now than before. Their parents, and, to a greater degree, their teachers, principals, counsellors, and superintendents believe there is a positive increase. Teachers, principals, counsellors, and superintendents indicated that student participation in summer school is greater. However, they felt that there is no effect attributable to this change. Clearly, though, teachers, principals, counsellors, and superintendents feel the students are now more test-wise and that this increase is of benefit to the students [2].

Lastly, the in-class achievement of the students appears to be at least as high as that prior to the introduction of the provincial examinations. While the majority of teachers, principals, counsellors, and superintendents suggested there has been no change, a substantial number indicated that, because of the provincial examinations, in-class achievement is actually higher and that this increase is of benefit to the students.

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[2] See previous footnote.

4.3 Effects on Teachers and Teaching Practices

4.3.1 Perceptions on Teaching Practices

Students' responses to questions regarding the effects of the examination program on teaching practices are presented in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Effects on Teaching Practices: Student Responses (response means)

	Students	
EFFECT	Change	Effect
1. Memorization of information	3.94	3.31
2. Opportunity to learn problem-solving skills	3.30	3.49
3. Encouraged to develop critical thinking skills	3.64	3.73
4. Challenged by teachers to learn	3.54	3.52
5. Expected to use textbooks	3.61	3.46
6. Use of supplementary course materials	3.28	3.33
7. Spend time in library researching information	3.06	3.27
8. Spend time in small-group instruction	2.93	3.21
9. Spend time in whole-class instruction	3.62	3.40
10. Spend time on written assignments involving research-based activities	3.53	3.47
11. Spend time on worksheet-type activities	3.41	3.33
12. Spend time on cooperative projects	2.94	3.13
13. Class field trips	2.25	2.79
14. Class laboratories	3.05	3.21
15. Number of classroom tests	3.82	3.34
16. Amount of homework is now ...	4.05	3.75
17. Number of multiple-choice items on classroom tests	3.44	3.26
18. Number of open-ended items on classroom tests	3.39	3.21

Change:		Effect:	
	1=much less		1=very detrimental
	3=no change		3=no effect
	5=much more		5=very beneficial

Students reported that they are expected to memorize information to a greater extent in the courses that have examinations than in other courses they take. However, they feel that in the examinable courses the opportunity to develop problem solving skills is greater and there is greater encouragement to develop critical thinking skills. In addition, the students feel they are more challenged by their teachers to learn in courses with examinations. In each instance the students viewed that the situation was positive and each was beneficial to their own education.

In examinable courses there appears to be an increase in the use of textbooks, and in the use of supplementary course materials, both with beneficial effects. While the time spent in the library researching information has not increased in courses that are examined, the time spent on writing assignments involving research-based activities has increased somewhat. Again, the students view both changes as being moderately beneficial.

The time spent in whole-class instruction seems to be greater in examinable courses while the time spent in small-group learning is essentially the same. Both circumstances are seen to be very slightly beneficial.

In the examinable courses, students perceive that worksheet-type activities take slightly more time, but there seems to be little difference in the time spent on cooperative projects, or in class laboratories. In each case the effect is seen to be slightly beneficial.

Class field trips are substantially reduced in courses with examinations, but the effect is seen to be only slightly detrimental. In contrast, students perceive that the amount of time spent doing homework is much greater, and this is seen to be definitely beneficial.

Finally, according to student views, the number of classroom tests is increased substantially in courses with provincial examinations, while the numbers of multiple-choice items, and open-ended questions, on tests is increased slightly. In each instance, the effect has been seen to be mildly beneficial.

Tables 4.9 and 4.10 present the mean responses of teachers, principals, counsellors and superintendents to questions regarding the effect of the examination program on teaching practices.

The change in breadth or scope of courses has clearly diminished, with a negative effect particularly expressed by counsellors and superintendents. However, the depth of coverage in courses seems not to have been changed by the Examination Program.

The emphasis placed on memorization is seen by counsellors, principals, and superintendents to have increased more definitely than by teachers. The overall effect of this trend toward greater memorization is seen to be very detrimental, especially by counsellors, principals and superintendents.

The emphases placed on problem solving, and on critical thinking have not changed substantially as far as these groups are concerned, and the effect seems to have been neutral.

The time spent on discretionary topics, and on locally-developed courses is considered to be substantially less following the introduction of the Examination Program, with a moderately detrimental effect.

In contrast, the use of provincial curriculum guides, and the use of authorized texts, have both increased substantially. These changes, however, are seen to have had virtually no effect on teaching practice.

The time spent coaching students how to take tests, and in providing them with out-of-class tutorials on examinable subjects, has increased substantially, both of which are viewed as being at least slightly beneficial.

Teachers' use of authorized supplementary course materials has changed little since the introduction of Grade 12 exams, but their use of non-authorized materials has diminished substantially, a circumstance that is viewed negatively by each of the four groups.

Individual attention given to weak and average students is virtually unchanged according to the perceptions of each group, however, it would seem that counsellors, principals, and superintendents, think that teachers are giving considerably more individual assistance to strong students than previously was the case, while the teachers themselves indicate only a slight increase. The counsellors and principals, particularly, view this positively.

It is the general perception that small group instruction has not changed much, whereas large group instruction has increased slightly. The effect, in both cases, is seen to be mildly detrimental.

The amount of homework assigned to students has increased substantially, and this is considered to have had a slightly positive effect.

With regard to the type of study activity, there is the general perception that the number of assignments involving creative or research-based activities has diminished, while the number of worksheet-type activities has increased, with the number of cooperative projects being slightly less than previously. In each case the change is seen to be somewhat detrimental, particularly regarding research-based activities.

In terms of classroom testing practices, there has been a striking increase in the use of multiple-choice items, a slight reduction in the use of open-ended items, and, in general, an increase in the number of tests administered in courses. The first two conditions are viewed to have had a negative effect, whereas the perceived increase in the number of tests is considered to have had little or no effect on teaching practice.

The weight assigned to test results, as opposed to projects, assignments, and labs, in final grades has increased somewhat. However, the time spent on examination-related activities has increased rather dramatically. A negative effect is attached to both cases.

And finally, the number of student field trips has been reduced, as has the number of labs, as well as the time available for labs. In each instance, the change is seen to have had a definitely negative outcome.

Table 4.9: Effects on Teaching Practices: Teacher and Principal Responses (response means)

	Teachers		Principals	
EFFECT	Change	Effect	Change	Effect
1. The breadth or scope of courses is now ...	2.63	2.53	2.52	2.59
2. The depth of coverage in courses is now ...	2.87	2.74	2.95	2.73
3. The emphasis placed on memorization is now ...	3.38	2.73	3.67	2.39
4. The emphasis on problem solving is now ...	3.14	3.08	3.03	3.04
5. The emphasis placed on critical thinking is now ...	3.18	3.13	3.08	3.01
6. The time spent on discretionary topics is now ...	2.09	2.16	1.88	2.03
7. The time spent on locally developed courses is now ...	2.35	2.46	2.54	2.67
8. The use of provincial curriculum guides is now ...	3.59	3.17	3.84	3.37
9. The use of authorized textbooks is now ...	3.29	2.95	3.57	3.14
10. The time spent coaching students how to take tests is now ...	3.91	3.17	4.10	3.36
11. The provision of out-of-class tutorials by the school on examinable subjects is now ...	3.62	3.32	3.87	3.58
12. The use of authorized supplementary course materials is now ...	2.88	2.88	3.04	3.09
13. The use of non-authorized supplementary materials is now ...	2.57	2.66	2.35	2.57
14. Individual attention given to weak students is now ...	3.06	2.97	3.06	2.97
15. Individual attention given to average students is now ...	3.08	3.02	3.14	3.04
16. Individual attention given to strong students is now ...	3.14	3.09	3.65	3.49
17. The use of small group instruction is now ...	2.88	2.88	3.01	2.99
18. The use of large group instruction is now ...	3.34	2.90	3.22	2.86
19. The amount of homework assigned to students is now ...	3.45	3.12	3.90	3.34
20. The number of assignments involving creative or research based activities is now ...	2.56	2.56	2.77	2.73
21. The number of worksheet-type activities is now ...	3.34	3.00	3.40	2.85
22. The number of cooperative projects is now ...	2.71	2.78	2.93	2.91
23. The use of multiple-choice items in classroom tests is now ...	3.75	2.90	3.95	2.60
24. The use of open-ended items in classroom tests is now ...	2.81	2.87	2.74	2.67
25. The number of tests in courses is now ...	3.34	3.03	3.69	3.09
26. The weight assigned to test results as opposed to projects, assignments & labs in final grades is now ...	3.41	2.77	3.41	2.54
27. The time spent on examination related activities is now ...	3.85	2.73	4.20	2.67
28. The number of field trips is now ...	2.41	2.39	2.25	2.19
29. The number of labs is now ...	2.58	2.62	2.59	2.65
30. The time available for labs is now ...	2.31	2.32	2.45	2.46

Change:	1=much narrower/less	3=no change	5=much broader/greater
Effect:	1=very detrimental	3=no effect	5=very beneficial

Table 4.10: Effects on Teaching Practices: Counsellor and Superintendent Responses (response means)

EFFECT	Counsellors		Superintendents	
	Change	Effect	Change	Effect
1. The breadth or scope of courses is now ...	2.42	2.18	2.33	2.36
2. The depth of coverage in courses is now ...	2.53	2.45	3.21	2.97
3. The emphasis placed on memorization is now ...	3.77	2.32	3.67	2.45
4. The emphasis on problem solving is now ...	2.70	2.60	2.94	2.91
5. The emphasis placed on critical thinking is now ...	2.63	2.53	2.82	2.79
6. The time spent on discretionary topics is now ...	1.75	1.77	2.00	2.15
7. The time spent on locally developed courses is now ...	2.27	2.36	2.58	2.66
8. The use of provincial curriculum guides is now ...	3.68	2.94	3.58	3.33
9. The use of authorized textbooks is now ...	3.51	2.81	3.47	3.09
10. The time spent coaching students how to take tests is now ...	3.98	2.75	4.21	3.21
11. The provision of out-of-class tutorials by the school on examinable subjects is now ...	3.82	3.23	3.76	3.39
12. The use of authorised supplementary course materials is now ...	2.72	2.66	2.70	2.73
13. The use of non-authorized supplementary materials is now ...	1.99	2.21	2.47	2.50
14. Individual attention given to weak students is now ...	2.62	2.52	3.13	3.13
15. Individual attention given to average students is now ...	2.96	2.83	3.13	3.03
16. Individual attention given to strong students is now ...	3.57	3.17	3.68	3.13
17. The use of small group instruction is now ...	2.81	2.78	2.84	2.87
18. The use of large group instruction is now ...	3.43	2.59	3.19	2.90
19. The amount of homework assigned to students is now ...	3.93	2.95	3.65	3.35
20. The number of assignments involving creative or research based activities is now ...	2.58	2.57	2.71	2.65
21. The number of worksheet-type activities is now ...	3.50	2.74	3.45	2.68
22. The number of cooperative projects is now ...	2.55	2.62	2.84	2.88
23. The use of multiple-choice items in classroom tests is now ...	4.00	2.51	3.58	2.52
24. The use of open-ended items in classroom tests is now ...	2.61	2.53	2.77	2.73
25. The number of tests in courses is now ...	3.73	2.87	3.84	3.03
26. The weight assigned to test results as opposed to projects, assignments & labs in final grades is now ...	3.64	2.53	3.48	2.45
27. The time spent on examination related activities is now ...	4.17	2.27	4.00	2.50
28. The number of field trips is now ...	2.03	2.06	2.36	2.45
29. The number of labs is now ...	2.51	2.49	2.70	2.67
30. The time available for labs is now ...	2.47	2.47	2.85	2.79

Change: 1=much narrower/less 3=no change 5=much broader/greater
Effect: 1=very detrimental 3=no effect 5=very beneficial

4.3.2 Perceptions about Teachers

The influence of the Provincial Examination Program upon teachers of Grade 12 subjects was assessed in terms of seven variables: teacher stress, sense of control over what they teach, and morale; teacher workload in teaching Grade 12 courses; teacher relationships with their students; and teacher interaction with other Grade 12 teachers and with teachers at the lower grade levels. Tables 4.11 and 4.12 display the mean responses of teachers, principals, counsellors and superintendents to effects that the provincial examination program has had on teachers in general.

Table 4.11: Effects on Teachers: Teacher and Principal Responses (response means)

	Teachers		Principals	
EFFECT	Change	Effect	Change	Effect
1. The relationship of teachers to students is now ...	3.11	3.14	3.26	3.30
2. The morale of teachers is now ...	2.51	2.46	2.71	2.66
3. Teachers' sense of control over what is taught is now ...	2.38	2.44	2.29	2.43
4. Teacher workload in grade 12 classes is now ...	XXXX†	2.63	XXXX†	2.51
5. Teacher stress is now ...	XXXX†	2.23	XXXX†	2.16
6. Teacher interaction with teachers in lower grades is now ...	2.86	2.84	3.01	2.99
7. Teacher interaction with other grade 12 subjects is now ...	2.98	2.96	3.09	3.07

†Due to an error on the survey forms, the means for the questions on change in teacher stress and change in teacher workload were not interpretable.

Change:	1=much worse/less	Effect:	1=very detrimental
	3=no change		3=no effect
	5=much better/greater		5=very beneficial

Overall, teachers, counsellors, principals, and superintendents view the effects of the Provincial Examination Program on teachers somewhat negatively. Teachers, principals, and counsellors reported that, due to the provincial examinations, the teacher morale is now lower. Over half of the teachers, three-quarters of the counsellors and principals, and two-thirds of the superintendents reported teachers now have less control over what they teach [3]. The respondents

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[3] To support these feelings of the lack of control over what they teach, as described in other sections of this report, the majority of respondents reported the time spent by teachers on discretionary and optional topics and on locally developed courses is now less, while the use of provincial curriculum guides and authorized textbooks has increased.

Table 4.12: Effects on Teachers: Counsellor and Superintendent Responses (response means)

EFFECT	Counsellors		Superintendents	
	Change	Effect	Change	Effect
1. The relationship of teachers to students is now ...	3.00	2.99	3.25	3.20
2. The morale of teachers is now ...	2.30	2.17	2.94	2.87
3. Teachers' sense of control over what is taught is now ...	2.13	2.17	2.24	2.35
4. Teacher workload in grade 12 classes is now ...	XXXX†	2.34	XXXX†	2.90
5. Teacher stress is now ...	XXXX†	1.84	XXXX†	2.50
6. Teacher interaction with teachers in lower grades is now ...	2.76	2.75	2.84	2.80
7. Teacher interaction with other grade 12 subjects is now ...	2.96	2.89	3.00	2.90

†Due to an error on the survey forms, the means for the questions on change in teacher stress and change in teacher workload were not interpretable.

Change:		Effect:	
	1=much worse/less		1=very detrimental
	3=no change		3=no effect
	5=much better/greater		5=very beneficial

further suggested that these changes in teacher morale and sense of control, together with the current levels of teacher stress and teacher workloads [4], adversely influence the climate of their schools.

Generally, the respondents see little change in the interaction between Grade 12 teachers with their students, other Grade 12 teachers, and teachers at the lower grade levels. Across the four groups, more than 70% of the respondents indicated that the relationships of the Grade 12 teachers with their students and other teachers are essentially the same as those prior to the Provincial Examination Program.[5]

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[4] Due to a problem with the survey form, the response for the questions on change in teacher workload and change in teacher stress were not interpretable.

[5] As reported above, the students viewed their relationships with their teachers positively. Asked to compare their relationships with their grade 12 teachers now as opposed to teachers in previous years, more than 57% of the students suggested that these relationships have improved. Whether the discrepancy between the students and the educators is due to the difference in the questions asked or that the students view student-teacher relationships differently than the educators is not clear. Perhaps of greater significance is that generally, very few of the respondents reported that the relationships between students and teachers have deteriorated.

4.4 Effects on Schools

Perceptions of the effects the examination program has had on schools were solicited from all groups. The mean responses for students and parents are reported in Table 4.13. Teacher and principal mean responses are displayed in Table 4.14 and the mean responses of counsellors and superintendents are presented in Table 4.15.

Table 4.13: Effects on Schools: Student and Parent Responses (response means)

	Students		Parents	
EFFECT	Change	Effect	Change	Effect
1. The spirit of schools is now ...	3.00	2.99	2.85	2.88
2. My confidence in schools is now ...	n.a.	n.a.	2.88	2.88
3. The accountability of schools is now ...	n.a.	n.a.	3.31	3.19
4. The effectiveness of schools is now ...	n.a.	n.a.	3.13	3.13

Change: 1=much worse Effect: 1=very detrimental
3=no change 3=no effect
5=much better 5=very beneficial
n.a. not applicable

As seen from these tables, students and parents were asked to assess the current level of school spirit, and teachers, counsellors, principals, and superintendents were asked to assess the overall tone of schools as affected by the presence of the provincial examinations. Parents, teachers, counsellors, principals, and superintendents were asked to indicate the degree and effect of change in public confidence in schools brought about by the introduction of the provincial examinations. The parents were also asked to assess changes in the accountability and effectiveness of the schools. The remaining effects upon schools — class size and school time-tables, adaptability of the curriculum to meet individual student interest, attention paid to the curricular link between Grade 12 and the lower grades, use of examinations in the lower grades, use of school-wide and district-wide examinations, use of school counselling services, and in-service opportunities related to Grade 12 courses — were evaluated by teachers, counsellors, principals, and superintendents.

Both the students and their parents felt that the Provincial Examination Program has not influenced school spirit. As shown in Table 4.13, the students reported that, compared to previous years in school, the spirit of their schools is unchanged. Their parents indicated that the current level of school spirit is virtually the same as the level of school spirit prior to the introduction of the provincial examinations.

While parents suggested that the schools are now more accountable, they reported that their own level of confidence in schools is unchanged. They further

Table 4.14: Effects on Schools: Teacher and Principal Responses (response means)

	Teachers		Principals	
EFFECT	Change	Effect	Change	Effect
1. The tone of the school is now ...	3.08	3.05	3.36	3.38
2. Public confidence in schools is now ...	2.95	2.85	3.60	3.61
3. Class size is now ...	2.93	2.71	2.92	2.92
4. School time-tabling problems are now ...	3.39	2.57	3.47	2.53
5. The attention given in the lower grades to curricular material linked to grade 12 examinable subjects is now ...	3.44	3.04	3.68	3.31
6. Adaptation of curriculum to meet individual student's interests is now ...	2.10	2.09	2.33	2.26
7. The use of school-wide exams is now ...	3.62	3.05	3.71	3.50
8. The use of district-wide exams is now ...	3.20	2.91	3.03	3.07
9. Use of examinations at lower grades is now ...	3.63	3.08	3.62	3.32
10. In-service opportunities related to grade 12 courses are now ...	3.09	2.99	3.47	3.48
11. Use of school counselling services for personal problems is now ...	3.41	2.86	3.58	2.81
12. Use of school counselling services for vocational information is now ...	3.39	3.26	3.68	3.58

Change: 1=much worse/less
3=no change
5=much better/greater

Effect: 1=very detrimental
3=no effect
5=very beneficial

felt that schools today are neither no more nor no less effective than before the introduction of the examinations.

Teachers, in agreement with the parents, reported that the public's confidence in schools is unchanged (see Table 4.14). However, principals, counsellors, and superintendents suggested that the inclusion of the Provincial Examination Program as part of the educational process has positively changed public confidence in schools.

Generally, teachers, principals, counsellors, and superintendents reported that class sizes today are approximately the same as class sizes before the provincial examinations. There is, though, general consensus that the Provincial Examination Program has caused time-tabling problems, and that these problems are detrimental to a positive school climate. The teachers, principals, counsellors, and superintendents felt more strongly about the negative effects of the Examination Program on their ability to meet individual student interests and needs. Nearly 70% of the teachers and 80% of the counsellors and over

Table 4.15: Effects on Schools: Counsellor and Superintendent Responses (response means)

EFFECT	Counsellors		Superintendents	
	Change	Effect	Change	Effect
1. The tone of the school is now ...	3.03	2.99	3.22	3.17
2. Public confidence in schools is now ...	3.28	3.22	3.36	3.39
3. Class size is now ...	3.13	2.66	3.00	2.97
4. School time-tabling problems are now ...	3.55	2.49	3.21	2.77
5. The attention given in the lower grades to curricular material linked to grade 12 examinable subjects is now ...	3.46	2.88	3.42	3.19
6. Adaptation of curriculum to meet individual student's interests is now ...	1.94	1.91	2.50	2.42
7. The use of school-wide exams is now ...	3.83	3.17	3.53	3.26
8. The use of district-wide exams is now ...	2.96	3.00	3.03	3.16
9. Use of examinations at lower grades is now ...	3.77	2.95	3.70	3.31
10. In-service opportunities related to grade 12 courses are now ...	3.10	2.95	3.28	3.26
11. Use of school counselling services for personal problems is now ...	3.86	3.16	3.16	2.72
12. Use of school counselling services for vocational information is now ...	3.86	3.70	3.16	3.00

Change: 1=much worse/less Effect: 1=very detrimental
3=no change 3=no effect
5=much better/greater 5=very beneficial

half of the principals and superintendents reported that the ability to adapt the curriculum to meet individual student's interests is now less than before with a consonant negative effect on the educational process.

The Provincial Examination Program also appears to have affected the curriculum and examination practices at the lower grades. Teachers, principals, counsellors, and superintendents generally reported that the attention given in the lower grades to curricular material linked to Grade 12 examinable subjects and the use of tests in the lower grades are now both greater than what they were before the provincial examinations. Regarding the effects of these changes, the teachers and counsellors suggested the increase attention given to the curriculum link and the greater use of tests at the lower grades have had virtually no effect on the educational process whereas principals and superintendents both believe the effect is positive.

Overall, more than half of the teachers, principals, counsellors, and superintendents indicated that, due to the Provincial Examination Program, the use of school-wide examinations in Grade 12 is now greater. Interestingly, while the teachers and counsellors felt this change has not influenced the education process, the principals and superintendents described the effects of the change more positively. However, the respondents agreed that the frequency and effect of the use of district-wide testing are both virtually unchanged from that prior to the provincial examinations.

With respect to counselling services, the counsellors, principals, and, to a lesser degree, teachers generally reported that the uses of counselling services for both personal problems and vocational guidance are greater now than prior to the provincial examinations. Further, the respondents viewed the effects upon school climate brought about by the changes in use of counselling services for vocational guidance more positively than the effects upon school climate attributable to the changes in the use of counselling services for personal problems. While counsellors, principals, and teachers felt the increase use of vocational counselling is positive, they indicated that school climate has been unaffected by the changes in personal problem counselling. Superintendents, on the other hand, felt the present use of counselling services both for personal problems and vocational reasons is essentially the same as the use of such services prior to the examinations. They noted that the lack of change in counselling services for personal problems adversely influences school climate, while the lack of change in vocational counselling has no effect.

Lastly, the majority of teachers, counsellors, and superintendents reported that there has been little change in in-service opportunities related to Grade 12 courses. They further suggested that this lack of change has virtually no effect upon the educational process. Nearly half of the principals, however, indicated that that such in-service opportunities are now greater than before the provincial examinations, and that this change positively influences educational practice.

4.5 Utilization of the Provincial Examination Program

The Ministry of Education produces and distributes a number of products from the Provincial Examination Program to educators throughout the province upon completion of each examination administration: the reports on student results at the individual student, school and provincial levels, the Examination Specifications detailing the structure of the examinations in each subject area, and copies of all old examinations. The use made of these products is the focus of this section of the report. Students, teachers, counsellors and administrators were asked how they use the examination results and products, and how they perceive that others use these results.

4.5.1 Student Perceptions of Use

Students were asked how frequently teachers make use of previous classes' results and copies of old examinations (Table 4.16). Students were also asked how frequently various examination uses were made.

Table 4.16: Utilization: Student Responses (response means)

USE	Students	
	Frequency	Effect
1. Teacher use of old examinations in class	3.08	4.13
2. Teachers tell us how previous classes did on the Provincial Examinations	2.88	3.37
3. Teachers emphasize the importance of the Provincial Examinations	3.39	3.62
4. Teachers teach how to write examinations	2.77	3.74

Frequency:		Effect:	
	1=never		1=very detrimental
	2=seldom		3=no effect
	3=some		5=very beneficial
	4=often		

The student responses suggest that there is a moderate use of examination materials by teachers and that this is of benefit to the students' education. The use of old examinations in classrooms was reported as "some" or "often" by most students and the effect has been viewed as positive. Teachers are emphasizing the importance of the Provincial Examinations and this is viewed as resulting in a positive effect. Teachers inform students of the performance of previous classes and teach examination writing skills but not, apparently, as frequently as they use old examinations. However, the effect of teaching students to write examinations was viewed as beneficial by the students.

More than three-quarters of the students indicated that their teachers use old provincial examinations in class and that this use of old examinations is of benefit to them. The majority of students further reported that their teachers tell them how previous classes did on previous examinations and that their teachers emphasize the importance of the provincial examinations. Lastly, the students reported that their teachers teach them how to write examinations, but, apparently, not as frequently as their teachers use old examinations. As shown in Table 4.16, the students generally felt that emphasis placed on the importance of the examinations and test-taking instruction are beneficial to them.

4.5.2 Use of Examination Results

Teachers, counsellors, principals and superintendents were asked how examination results were used in the classroom and to indicate the effect of this use upon the educational system (Tables 4.17 and 4.18). The response scales were as previously noted.

Table 4.17: Utilization of Results: Teacher and Principal Responses (response means)

	Teachers		Principals	
USE	Frequency	Effect	Frequency	Effect
1. The results of Provincial Exams are reviewed with/for students	3.31	3.64	3.69	4.07
2. The results of Provincial Exams are compared across classes	3.00	3.39	3.36	3.83
3. The results of Provincial Exams are compared to marks awarded by teachers	3.55	3.57	3.60	3.91
4. The Provincial Exam results of students are compared to other students ...				
- within the school	3.13	3.38	2.65	3.43
- within the district	3.16	3.35	3.26	3.70
- within the province	3.26	3.44	3.28	3.65

Frequency: 1=never
2=seldom
3=some
4=often

Effect: 1=very detrimental
3=no effect
5=very beneficial

Table 4.18: Utilization of Results: Counsellor and Superintendent Responses (response means)

USE	Counsellors		Superintendents	
	Frequency	Effect	Frequency	Effect
1. The results of Provincial Exams are reviewed with/for students	3.12	3.51	3.76	4.09
2. The results of Provincial Exams are compared across classes	2.58	3.29	2.93	3.52
3. The results of Provincial Exams are compared to marks awarded by teachers	3.00	3.41	3.61	3.97
4. The Provincial Exam results of students are compared to other students ...				
- within the school	2.20	3.15	2.43	3.20
- within the district	2.68	3.22	2.96	3.50
- within the province	2.55	3.29	3.35	3.68

Frequency: 1=never Effect: 1=very detrimental
2=seldom 3=no effect
3=some 5=very beneficial
4=often

There was general consistency across respondent groups with the "frequency" of use centred at 3.2 indicating that there is "some" use of examination results in the listed manner. This suggests that the exam results are used to a moderate degree within the schools in terms of reviewing student results, and comparing these results to those awarded by the teacher or to those results in other schools within the district or across the province. However, the counsellors tended to view the frequency of use of exam results as somewhat lower than did teachers, principals and superintendents. The "effects" for all respondent groups were centred at 3.7 which suggests that the use of the results of the Examination Program was having a moderately beneficial effect upon the educational system. This was consistent across all respondent groups. However, there were substantial numbers of teachers and counsellors (20 to 50%) that responded "I don't know" to these items. The response means reported are based only on those teachers and counsellors that did respond on the 4-point scale.

4.5.3 Use of Examination Materials

Teachers, counsellors, principals and superintendents were asked how the Examination Specifications and copies of old examinations were used in the classroom (Tables 4.19 and 4.20).

Again there was general consensus across all respondent groups both in terms of reported frequency of use and the effect upon the educational system. The

Table 4.19: Utilization of Materials: Teacher and Principal Responses (response means)

USE	Teachers		Principals	
	Frequency	Effect	Frequency	Effect
1. The Provincial Exam Program is used to define content of courses	3.27	3.06	3.52	3.37
2. The Exam Specifications are discussed with students	3.31	3.41	3.47	3.86
3. The relationship of course content to Exam Specifications are explicitly described to students	3.04	3.39	3.23	3.71
4. The Exam Specifications are used in the development of classroom tests	2.91	3.41	3.20	3.83
5. The Exam Specifications are used in the development of school-wide tests	2.61	3.31	2.70	3.56
6. Old Provincial Exams are administered as complete two-hour examinations to students	2.27	3.50	2.66	3.71
7. Selected questions from old Provincial Exams are administered at relevant points in class	3.46	3.96	3.62	4.17
8. How often do the results on old Provincial Exams count toward students grades	2.72	3.48	2.39	3.16
9. How often are the results on old Provincial Exams used to guide instruction	2.84	3.48	3.05	3.50

Frequency: 1=never
2=seldom
3=some
4=often

Effect: 1=very detrimental
3=no effect
5=very beneficial

Examination Program is used to "some" extent to define course content and in the development of classroom tests. Copies of old examinations are used in the classroom particularly to select specific items to administer to students at relevant points in the course and to a lesser extent administered as complete 2 hour examinations. These uses of Examination Program materials were viewed as moderately beneficial.

Table 4.20: Utilization of Materials: Counsellor and Superintendent Responses (response means)

USE	Counsellors		Superintendents	
	Frequency	Effect	Frequency	Effect
1. The Provincial Exam Program is used to define content of courses	3.54	2.92	3.33	2.88
2. The Exam Specifications are discussed with students	3.47	3.29	3.12	3.56
3. The relationship of course content to Exam Specifications are explicitly described to students	3.30	3.08	3.07	3.32
4. The Exam Specifications are used in the development of classroom tests	3.32	3.11	3.00	3.58
5. The Exam Specifications are used in the development of school-wide tests	2.82	3.10	2.46	3.26
6. Old Provincial Exams are administered as complete two-hour examinations to students	3.05	3.40	2.90	3.30
7. Selected questions from old Provincial Exams are administered at relevant points in class	3.56	3.69	3.35	3.87
8. How often do the results on old Provincial Exams count toward students grades	2.38	3.12	2.28	3.07
9. How often are the results on old Provincial Exams used to guide instruction	3.21	3.07	2.94	3.37

Frequency: 1=never Effect: 1=very detrimental
2=seldom 3=no effect
3=some 5=very beneficial
4=often

4.5.4 Use by Others

Teachers, counsellors, principals and superintendents were asked how examination results were used by others: teachers, district administrators, school board, parents, employers, officials at post-secondary institutes, and the Ministry of Education (Tables 4.21 and 4.22). They were also asked about the influence of the Examination Program in regard to allocation of educational resources and in the determination of local awards and scholarships.

Teachers and counsellors appeared to be reluctant to speculate on the use of exam results by others. The proportion of non-response was in the 30 to 70% range for these questions. Principals displayed less reticence with non-response rates of 0 to 64%

In regard to the use of examination results to evaluate teachers by school administrators, district administrators or by school board members, teachers and counsellors viewed this use occurring more frequently than did principals and superintendents. There appears to be a discrepancy in the perceived amount of teacher evaluation going on, with those being evaluated (the teachers) perceiving more teacher evaluation happening than do those responsible for the evaluation (principals and superintendents). Although there is this discrepancy in the perceived amount of use of exam results for teacher evaluation, there is more consensus in regard to the effects of this use. In general the respondents view the use of exam results for teacher evaluation as being detrimental to the educational system.

The use of exam results in the evaluation of schools by district administrators, the school board and parents was viewed differently by teachers and counsellors in comparison to the views of principals and superintendents, although the differences are not as pronounced as with teacher evaluation. In general, all respondent groups view the use of exam results for school evaluation as more frequent than the use of these results for teacher evaluation. The effect of this use is viewed as moderately detrimental to the educational system.

Respondents reported they were of the view that the Ministry of Education used exam results "some" to "often" in the comparison of school districts, and that this use was moderately detrimental to the educational system. They reported the view that the Ministry of Education uses the Examination Program to influence the nature and content of the Grade 12 curriculum to "some" extent, however this had little effect on the educational system. In regard to the allocation of educational resources by the Ministry, respondents reported that exam results were used "seldom" for this purpose, and the use had a moderately detrimental effect on the educational system.

There appears to be some use of the exam results in the determination of teaching assignments but the effects on the educational system are viewed as moderately detrimental to negligible.

Table 4.21: Utilization by Others: Teacher and Principal Responses (response means)

USE	Teachers		Principals	
	Frequency	Effect	Frequency	Effect
1. School administrators use results in the evaluation of teachers	2.88	2.26	1.72	2.81
2. District administrators use results in the evaluation of teachers	2.85	2.11	1.67	2.44
3. The school board uses results in the evaluation of teachers	2.62	2.14	1.62	2.28
4. District administrators use results in the evaluation of schools	3.18	2.20	2.52	2.41
5. The school board uses results in the evaluation of schools	3.11	2.21	2.45	2.27
6. Parents use results in the evaluation of schools	3.05	2.41	2.64	2.81
7. Parents use the results in deciding in which high school to enroll their child	2.62	2.56	2.27	2.71
8. Universities use results to select students for admission	3.64	3.02	3.70	3.01
9. Colleges use the results to select students for admission	3.48	2.99	3.35	3.03
10. Employers use the results to select students for jobs	2.51	2.93	2.12	2.81
11. School administrators use results in determining teaching assignments	2.74	2.67	2.30	3.37
12. The Ministry of Education uses the Exam Program to influence the nature and content of the Grade 12 curriculum	3.17	2.57	3.08	3.00
13. The Ministry of Education uses the results to compare different school districts	3.49	2.25	3.24	2.39
14. The Provincial Exam Program influences the allocation of educational resources	2.71	2.27	2.22	2.57
15. Provincial exam results are used to determine local awards and scholarships	2.84	3.14	2.29	3.26

Frequency: 1=never
2=seldom
3=some
4=often

Effect: 1=very detrimental
3=no effect
5=very beneficial

Table 4.22: Utilization by Others: Counsellor and Superintendent Responses (response means)

USE	Counsellors		Superintendents	
	Frequency	Effect	Frequency	Effect
1. School administrators use results in the evaluation of teachers	2.00	2.56	1.79	2.75
2. District administrators use results in the evaluation of teachers	2.87	2.22	1.33	2.69
3. The school board uses results in the evaluation of teachers	2.81	1.98	1.06	2.53
4. District administrators use results in the evaluation of schools	3.27	2.27	2.15	3.17
5. The school board uses results in the evaluation of schools	3.14	2.04	1.63	2.61
6. Parents use results in the evaluation of schools	2.79	2.42	2.55	2.71
7. Parents use the results in deciding in which high school to enroll their child	2.34	2.34	1.75	2.67
8. Universities use results to select students for admission	3.68	3.21	3.77	2.97
9. Colleges use the results to select students for admission	3.07	3.02	3.30	2.87
10. Employers use the results to select students for jobs	2.13	2.80	2.30	2.73
11. School administrators use results in determining teaching assignments	1.41	2.60	2.48	3.33
12. The Ministry of Education uses the Exam Program to influence the nature and content of the Grade 12 curriculum	3.46	2.30	3.12	2.78
13. The Ministry of Education uses the results to compare different school districts	3.63	2.10	2.90	2.32
14. The Provincial Exam Program influences the allocation of educational resources	2.90	1.94	2.00	2.48
15. Provincial exam results are used to determine local awards and scholarships	2.36	3.04	2.39	3.28

Frequency:		Effect:	
	1=never		1=very detrimental
	2=seldom		3=no effect
	3=some		5=very beneficial
	4=often		

The respondents viewed the use of exam results by parents in the selection of schools as occurring "seldom", and this use was viewed as having little effect upon the educational system.

The respondents reported that colleges and universities used the examination results for student admission "some" of the time or "often", although this had little effect on the educational system. Employers, on the other hand, were viewed as using the exam results "seldom" in the selection of students for employment [6].

The results of the Examination Program are used to a limited extent in the determination of local awards and scholarships according to the respondents, but with little positive or negative effect.

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[6] As reported in in following sections of this report, admission officers for post-secondary institutions were interviewed and reported that, although they do not use the provincial examination marks *per se*, they perceive that the Provincial Examination Program has led to more equitable treatment of students. Employers were also interviewed regarding their use of the examinations and, with the exception of selection of officers in the military, the examinations were never used by the employers interviewed. In fact, most of the employers were not even aware that such a program existed.

4.6 Other Effects

Students, teachers, counsellors, principals and superintendents were asked about the changes the Grade 12 Provincial Examinations have had upon various aspects of the testing programs the Ministry of Education is involved with: the Scholarship Examinations Program and the Grade 12 Exam Program itself. Mean responses for both change and effect are reported for students, teachers and principals in Table 4.23, and for counsellors and superintendents in Table 4.24.

Table 4.23: Other Effects: Student, Teacher, and Principal Responses (response means)

	Students		Teachers		Principals	
EFFECT	Change	Effect	Change	Effect	Change	Effect
1. Interest in the Scholarship Program	3.22	3.15	3.37	3.27	3.52	3.33
2. Feelings about subjects which are examined provincially	2.83	2.84	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
3. Student selection of examinable courses	n.a.	n.a.	2.76	2.62	2.72	2.54
4. Student selection of non-examinable courses	n.a.	n.a.	3.41	2.62	3.47	2.77
5. The status of examinable subjects	n.a.	n.a.	3.54	2.96	3.89	3.23
6. The status of non-examinable courses	n.a.	n.a.	2.59	2.41	2.67	2.60

Change: 1=much less/lower Effect: 1=very detrimental
3=no change 3=no effect
5=much greater/higher 5=very beneficial
n.a. not applicable

All respondent groups were asked about the change in interest in the Scholarship Program. The average response across all groups was that there was little or no change in interest. And, as one might expect, this perceived lack of change in interest has had no effect on the educational system.

Educators were asked about any changes in student selection of examinable courses. They reported no change in this selection and no effect. The selection of non-examinable courses was reported as somewhat greater but still it seems that there has been very little perceived change or effect.

In regard to the "status" of courses, it appears that the "status" of examinable courses has increased whereas that of non-examinables has decreased. The effect on the examinable courses has been negligible but slightly detrimental to the non-examinable courses.

Students were asked about their feelings toward those subjects that do have Provincial Exams (the examinables). There appears to be little change in the student feelings toward these subjects with no perceived effect on the educational system.

Table 4.24: Other Effects: Counsellor and Superintendent Responses (response means)

EFFECT	Counsellors		Superintendents	
	Change	Effect	Change	Effect
1. Interest in the Scholarship Program	3.53	3.40	3.29	3.28
2. Student selection of examinable courses	2.85	2.59	2.81	2.97
3. Student selection of non-examinable courses	3.44	2.51	3.47	2.66
4. The status of examinable subjects	3.52	3.03	3.69	3.03
5. The status of non-examinable courses	2.61	2.56	2.50	2.43

Change:	1=much less/lower	Effect:	1=very detrimental
	3=no change		3=no effect
	5=much greater/higher		5=very beneficial

4.7 Open-Ended Comments from Questionnaires

Each questionnaire concluded a series of questions inviting the respondents to comment on the Provincial Examination Program:

1. What are the benefits and problems of the Provincial Examination Program?
2. What is your evaluation of the Provincial Examination Program?
3. How would you change the program?
4. Have your standards for student achievement changed as a results of the Provincial Examination Program?

The majority of respondents submitted written comments. A sample of approximately 40% of each respondent group was selected for analysis: 750 students, 365 teachers, 237 parents, 47 principals, 41 counsellors and 23 superintendents. The comments on each item were read to detect the general patterns for each respondent group. The results for each respondent group will be described through a summary of comments and general trends in these data. Since the written responses of some groups were quite similar, the results of the counsellors are combined with those of the teachers, and those of the superintendents with those of the principals, where differences were evident they are reported. The results are reported for students, teachers and counsellors, parents, and principals and superintendents. For each group, the results are described for each of the four questions noted above.

4.7.1 Students

The majority of students responding to the questionnaire (approximately 80%) wrote comments. Overall the students viewed the Provincial Examination Program as being too stressful. Although the exams tend to stimulate students to study more and work harder which the student viewed as a benefit, the Examination Program has gone a bit too far — resulting in an atmosphere of stress which was the major problem with the Provincial Examination Program.

The benefits and problems of the Provincial Examination Program

The term most frequently used by students was "stress". Students commented that the Provincial Examination Program causes considerable stress for students in grade 12. The stress was related to the increased workload the exams demanded throughout the grade 12 school year, and the pressure they created by condensing a year's work down to a single two hour test. As one student noted, in the exam a student is "... trying to jam all what you have learned into a few hours". This was a theme repeated in many of the comments students wrote regarding the stress, pressure and panic related to life in grade 12 with the Provincial Examinations.

Students noted an unfairness to the exams in that the exam mark is weighted too heavily in determining a student's final grade and so is unduly influential. The general problem reported was that the exams could unfairly lower grades if a student had a bad day or was prone to anxiety in regard to test situations. A few noted another side to the problem: "Students can goof off all year but ace the Provincial", and in this way come out with a good final grade without having put in the effort throughout the year. Another aspect of unfairness of the Provincial Examinations was the perceived attempt to "squeeze" a whole year's work onto a two hour exam. This is unfair itself and also results in the focus of the course being narrowed to a small range of information to be learned or memorized.

Students identified a number of problems associated with time. There was a crush on the time available during the school term for anything other than exam related activities. This was focussed both in the class where the teachers were pressured to teach what was on the test and had no time for any diversion from exam related material. The diversions mentioned included labs, topics of interest or varying the depth of coverage of specific areas of interest. Also, the exams were related to problems of time within the students' out-of-school life where studying and homework were the main student pursuits. It should be noted that the questionnaire results do not suggest that the Examination Program has severely decreased the amount of extra-curricular activity.

Students commented on problems with the Examination Program itself. Some reported that the exam schedules were just not long enough, with too many exams crowded into too few days. The exams themselves were viewed by some students as too long, there were too many questions to be completed within the time allowed. Students suggested reducing the length of the exam, one suggested eliminating time limits.

A frequently mentioned benefit was that the exams tended to motivate individuals to study more, to work harder and pay more attention to school. Another benefit reported was the increase in challenge the exams provided. Some students noted that they were more serious about school, a few even commented on an increase in their discipline — as a benefit.

Students also commented that the exams contributed to equity of the schools in the sense that in terms of evaluation "...everyone gets an equal chance", and "...all students are rated on the same scale." The writing of the same exam throughout the province and the results being comparable across the province was described as a benefit by a number of students. This common exam providing province-wide comparability was often related to comments regarding the benefits of the exam marks for admission to university and the writing of exams as good preparation for study at university.

Students often expressed concern about being properly prepared for the examinations. Students seemed worried that their teachers would "do a good job" in the sense of "covering all the material" so that they would be ready to write the exam. Student also expressed some concern for teachers in regard to the reduced flexibility in teaching they now had due to the narrowing of curriculum effect of the exams. These concerns were related to further student comments on their increased workload. The increased workload was viewed as increased amounts of information to memorize. This was expressed directly and also through comments regarding the narrowing of the focus of classroom teaching to exam-specific information which many students viewed as uninteresting, but necessary to ingest in order to pass the exams.

Evaluation of the Provincial Examination Program

In general students were relatively positive in their evaluation of the Provincial Examination Program. Students seem to accept the Examination Program as part of the fixtures of schooling, and although the comments were not enthusiastic, many students termed the program essentially fair or beneficial. A few students suggested scrapping it. Many students did not offer an overall evaluation.

One student summed it up neatly: "I'd rather not write the tests; the idea of studying and then doing poorly scares me — but I guess it's something that has to be endured. It's what we get for taking academic courses."

Suggested changes to the Provincial Examination Program

The most frequently suggested modification to the Examination Program was to reduce the weighting given the Provincial Exam mark in determining the student's final grade. The students suggested lowering the weighting to the 20-25% range. A number of student suggested eliminating the Examination Program and basing the final grade solely on teacher-awarded marks.

Students suggested changing the exam timetable to allow for more time between exams. A few students suggested breaking the Provincial Exams down into a number of smaller tests administered 2 or 3 times during the school year. Students also suggested increasing the time allowed a student to complete an an exam from the current 2 hours. One student suggested eliminating time limits altogether.

A few students suggested the use of teacher recommendations to exempt high-achieving students from having to write the Provincial Examinations.

Changes in standards for student achievement as a result of the Provincial Examination Program

The students expressed mixed opinions regarding the influence of the Provincial Examination Program upon their standards of their own achievement. Substantial numbers of students said that their standards had increased. Two views on the increase in standards are representative of many of the comments written: "Yes, 'cause who wants to fail?" and "Yes, those classes that I have exams in make me study more and work more."

The other positions held in regard to standards of achievement were that no, standards had not changed (many adding that their standards had always been high); and no, standards had been lowered. The latter position, although that of a substantial proportion of students, was the least frequently expressed.

4.7.2 Teachers and Counsellors

Most teachers (73%) wrote comments about the Provincial Examination Program. In general, a responding teacher described both the positive and negative aspects of the exam program in his or her written comments. A minority (approximately 30%) of counsellors wrote comments.

The benefits and problems of the Provincial Examination Program

The benefits and problems most often noted were focussed on the influence of the Examination Program in the providing a common or "standardized" curriculum within the school system. The provision of a common curriculum was viewed as a benefit in itself in that all students in B.C. can focus academic attention on "core curriculum" and this provides students with a "uniform standard". Further, the evaluation of student achievement can be more equitable. However, although there were benefits from the standardization of the curriculum there are also some serious problems, the main one being the narrowing of the curriculum. A consistent theme in regard to problems of the Examination Program was the reduction in scope of examinable courses — reduction in the range of topics that could be covered, reduction in the amount of labs, field trips and research activities; in essence, reduction in the attention paid to any material or activities that were not directly related to the Provincial Examinations in that course.

Amongst benefits noted by teachers was the influence of the Examination Program in "structuring" the curriculum in the sense of specific description of what the course is about (albeit a narrower course as noted above). This in turn helps to keep both teachers and students "on track", and provides students with a structured academic goal.

Another benefit some teachers noted that the Examination Program facilitates "a serious attitude" within students in regard to academic standards. However, this serious attitude may contribute to student stress which is viewed as a major problem associated with the Examination Program. Another benefit described was the preparation of students for university.

Teachers also commented that the examinations also tend to enhance provide the public perception of the educational system in that the system is accountable, "regulated" and effective.

Several teachers commented on the benefit the Examination Program provides in regard to professional development opportunities for teachers through involvement on marking committees and exam construction committees. This involvement was viewed very positively.

The most noted problem with the Examination Program was the aforementioned narrowing of the curriculum, resulting in "teaching to the test". Further, the narrowing is reported as being toward more memorization, and less critical thinking, problem solving and creativity. This leads to the loss of opportunity to study topics and areas of specific interest to the class and the teacher, and to utilize the strengths and interests of individual teachers. The exams de-emphasize the full scope of the course for the student to the extent that, as one teacher put it, the key instructional question for students is "What's on the exam?"

Another problem identified by several teachers was the creation of stress on the students. Although not commented on at length by any individual, stress was a constant theme throughout the written comments. The stress was consistently associated with students and to a lesser extent with teachers as well.

There were also several problems noted about the exams themselves: too much reliance on multiple-choice item formats, too much reliance on memorization as opposed to higher-order thinking skills, variability in test difficulty one administration to the next, and too much focus on "trivialities" within the course being examined.

Comments were also made in regard to the committees of teachers who create the examinations. Some teachers view the committee structure as "an old boys club" which takes a view of the curriculum that results in tests that do not well represent the course being examined. However, some teachers viewed the committee structure and the whole of the Examination Program as operating quite well and generating good products.

Several teachers commented on the "scaling" of the examination results. The scaling (one teacher termed them "cooked scores") is viewed as undermining the credibility of the exams in general. One teacher commented, "I don't see any merit in passing marks of 30%, this destroys student ambition and self-confidence". Another said, "The scaling of marks for political purposes (to make the government look good) negates the whole purpose of exams, a passing mark should be 50% pure and simple."

A number of teachers viewed the Examination Program as a means of evaluating programs and of evaluating teachers, and that these uses were themselves problems. In regard to the former, teachers commented that there are better, more economic ways of evaluating the high school program such as the Provincial Learning Assessment Program. In regard to the use of exam results for teacher evaluation: teacher evaluation was regarded negatively as a form of intimidation, and the use of exam results, if used for this purpose, were being misinterpreted.

A few teachers commented on the effect the Provincial Exams were having on the marks they awarded students. The exams have tended to "inflate" the teacher awarded marks in examinable subjects and so adversely affect standards.

Some other problems noted by teachers is that the exams reduce teacher and student "ownership" of the curriculum, they lead to an emphasis on mediocrity — "the norms instead of excellence." Further, the exams lead to a decrease in the importance of day-to-day school activities such as quizzes, assignments and projects. And, as one teacher noted, some schools "cheat" on time allocations by increasing the time allotted to the examinables.

Evaluation of the Provincial Examination Program

The Provincial Examination Program received mixed evaluations with a substantial proportions of teachers being non-committal (approximately 40%), positive (approximately 37%) and negative (approximately 22%). Counsellors tended to be more negative in that approximately 30% gave the program a negative evaluation, although the same proportion as teachers (40%) gave it a positive evaluation.

The teachers and counsellors giving a positive evaluation tended to be qualified in their judgement. They commented on some of the aforementioned problems but were positive in their overall evaluation. The teachers and counsellors evaluating the program negatively tended to be consistent in their negative ratings accorded the Examination Program with little if any benefits described. A common view of those giving a negative evaluation was to "scrap it."

Overall there appears to be a grudging satisfaction with the Provincial Examination Program.

Suggested changes to the Provincial Examination Program

A major topic of comment was the weighting given the Provincial Examination score in the determination of a student's final grade. Most comments recommended a reduction in the weight of the Provincial Exam score. The reduction to 40% in the 1990-1991 school year was well received by teachers commenting on this aspect of the program. However, several Teachers suggested a weight of 30% and less. A much smaller number commented that the current 50% weighting was satisfactory and one teacher suggested to increase the weighting.

As noted above a number of teachers suggested terminating the Provincial Examination Program. Many viewed the program as an unnecessary expense. The savings realized from its termination could be better spent in the instructional side of the system. One teacher commented that "... the 20 or 30 million spent on running them should go back into the public school system."

On the other hand, a number of teachers suggested expanding the Examination Program. Some suggested expansion to other grade 12 subjects (Western Civilization 12 was one subject that drew specific comment — both for and against inclusion in the program). Others suggested expansion of the program into grade 11, some even suggested to grade 10. Also, English 12 was recommended by a few teachers for inclusion into the Scholarship Program.

A number of the suggested changes centred on modifications to the exams themselves. One modification suggested by a number of teachers was to reduce the emphasis on memorization and multiple-choice items (to an extent these are viewed as synonymous), and increase emphasis on critical thinking, and on written, oral and lab sections of the exam.

Several teachers suggested the elimination of "scaled" scores from the Examination Program. Others suggested a separate reporting of the school and the exam mark (i.e., no combination of the two scores).

A number of suggestions were directed at the exam construction procedures. The committees could be more representative of the teachers in that subject throughout the province. As one respondent commented, "...depoliticize the exam committees." Another suggested broadening teacher input through electronic mail conferencing. A few teachers noted that input to the procedures was adequate.

A number of suggestions centred on the compulsory, inclusive nature of the Examination Program. A few teachers suggested making them voluntary (one teacher suggested that students be charged a fee to offset costs). Several teachers suggested the development of a system of recommendation in which students doing well in the subject (an "A" or "B" student, for example) would be exempt from the exams. Although one teacher viewed as a benefit of the program that the exams got rid of the "mind games" of such a recommendation system.

Changes in standards for student achievement as a result of the Provincial Examination Program

Most teachers responding to the issue of standards considered that their standards were high irrespective of the existence of the Provincial Examination Program. Given this, there appeared to be three main positions.

Some teachers saw their standards had declined in the examinable subjects because the curriculum had narrowed to rote learning so expectations for students in regard to higher order cognitive processing had in fact decreased. As one teacher put it: "Now I am a trainer of students for government exams".

Some teachers were of the view that their standards had not changed.

Some teachers reported that their standards had risen since the introduction of the current Examination Program as had those of their students.

A fourth position which was not prevalent amongst the teachers, was that the exams had influenced the way they graded their students. In determining the teacher awarded grade in an examinable subject, standards tended to be lower in order to compensate for possible ill-effects of the Provincial Exam on the lives of their students.

4.7.3 Parents

The main theme of concern running through the parents' comments was fair and equitable treatment for students. The evaluation of student achievement should be fair in that the process takes into account the whole spectrum of achievements of the student, and so the exams should test more than simple recall of factual information, they should not count for such a great proportion of the final grade, and students who have difficulty in test situations should not be penalized. The exams should be equitable in that each student has the same classroom opportunities to learn regardless of which school in the province the student attends .

The benefits and problems of the Provincial Examination Program

Parents comments on the benefits of the Examination Program centred on the student challenge and motivation it stimulated, and on the consistency it promoted within the schools.

The Examination Program was viewed as promoting challenge for students and this was considered a benefit. On the other hand, parents also noted very frequently that one of the main problems with the program was the stress it induced in students, and teachers, as well. So although it appears that the increased motivation and challenge is welcome, it should be optimally present in the school system to avoid undue stress.

Consistency was a term parents used often in commenting on the Examination Program. The consistency took the form of more consistent and comparable standards and measures of student achievement throughout the province. This was viewed as leading to more equitable treatment of students. Also, consistency in the course offered throughout the province ("...the standardization of the courses") was viewed as a benefit of the Examination Program, particularly for those families who periodically move residence within the province.

However, there were frequent comments in regard to the consistency of instruction provided students. Parents expressed some concern over the adequacy of instruction provided to grade 12 students. It was pointed out that some students are at an advantage in regard to Examination performance. Some schools and teachers are better than others, so those students tend to achieve better results than students of other schools. The Examination Program was viewed as a positive influence in equalizing instruction.

One of the benefits noted was the preparation the exams provided for university. Students could experience first hand the writing of formal exams. However it was also noted that the program was aimed at university-bound students only and did not attend to skills and abilities of those students not intending to pursue a university program. As one parent commented, the Examination Program "...caters to the bright students only."

Parents also noted the tendency of the exams to narrow the curriculum and to increase the focus of grade 12 courses on recall knowledge of the content of the course as opposed to application of the content in problem solving and critical thinking. This was viewed as a problem which could be addressed through the development of better exams and utilizing a wider base of information upon which to evaluate student achievement (as noted below).

Parents frequently commented another narrowing aspect of the exams: narrowing the information set upon which student evaluation is based. A single, two-hour exam was considered by many parents to be inadequate to capture the range of achievements of a student. Not only is the exam itself a reduced information set, but some students are not able to demonstrate their abilities fully due to the anxiety the exams induce. The exams can, in effect, penalize the student who performs consistently well throughout the year yet has an "off-day" when writing the exam, or simply does not perform well in an exam situation.

Some technical problems were described. The scheduling of exams within the academic year results in the delivery of final grades too late in the year. Another problem identified was that the exams were scheduled too close together during the administration period and this does not allow a student "... to catch her breath" between one exam and the next.

Evaluation of the Provincial Examination Program

The majority of parents who wrote an evaluation of the Examination Program were positive — it was viewed as a benefit to the schools.

Suggested changes to the Provincial Examination Program

A change very frequently suggested was in regard to the weighting accorded the Provincial Exam score in the determination of the student's final grade. Parents would like to see the Provincial mark reduced in weight (suggested values ranged from 20% to 35%). The main reason for this was fairness — a two hour exam should not count for the whole year's work.

There were a few parents who suggested that the Examination Program should be expanded to other grades. One rationale for this was that the information base for student evaluation would be spread out and not based solely (or a sizable proportion of 40 or 50%) on a single two-hour exam. Another was that these exams in lower grades would allow for better student preparation for the Grade 12 Examinations.

There were also a few parents (approximately 14%) who suggested that the program be scrapped.

A few parents commented that they did not know enough about the Examination Program to evaluate or suggest changes, and would appreciate more information about the program.

Changes in standards for student achievement as a result of the Provincial Examination Program

Parents views on standards was mixed with no clear overall direction. Many parents considered that the standards of their children had increased and so, in a sense, had their's. Others suggested that educational standards in general had declined since they had been in school. Others simply commented "no", standards had not changed.

4.7.4 Principals and Superintendents

The principals and superintendents, in general, were positive in regard to the Provincial Examination Program.

The benefits and problems of the Provincial Examination Program

The benefits noted for the Provincial Examination Program were similar to those described by the teachers: increased consistency of the curriculum throughout the province, provision of curricular focus particularly in terms definite goals and structure for both teachers and students, increasing "seriousness" of students and their attention to academic aspects of school.

The promotion of consistency of curriculum was a frequent benefit noted by principals, much more so than teachers. The comments of principals suggested that although most teachers did follow the provincial curriculum, there were cases of "free wheeling in subject matter", and the Examination Program tends to encourage "..adhering to a prescribed curriculum."

In addition, there was increased mention of the accountability function of the program for students, teachers and schools, and this was viewed as a benefit. Also, the comparability of results was also described as a benefit of the Provincial Examination Program by a few principals. Some principals described the program as providing a "bench mark" in terms of student achievement.

The problems of the Examination Program centred on the narrowing of the curriculum. As one principal stated, the exams are "...too restrictive, very little flexibility to take advantage of local environment." Another commented that "...opportunities for the teachable moments have been lost." Along with this narrowing of curriculum is the focussing of the curriculum on recall or memorization kinds of skills rather than critical and creative thinking skills. By "teaching to the test", the courses concentrate on knowledge ingestion to the exclusion of exploration or in-depth study of those topics and areas that are relevant within the context of the particular classroom but are unlikely to be "on the exam."

The Examination Program also creates undue stress in both students and teachers. Although the nature of the stress was not described in any detail, it was frequently listed as a problem identified with the Examination Program.

A few principals noted that the exams also create administrative problems within the schools.

A few principals also noted that the Examination Program tends to contradict the philosophy underlying THE YEAR 2000 document.

Evaluation of the Provincial Examination Program

A substantial majority (approximately 80%) of principals who wrote comments on the Provincial Examinations Program evaluated the program positively. A general comment was that the program was working beneficially and had improved over time.

Suggested changes to the Provincial Examination Program

The most frequently suggested modification was directed to the issue of the narrowing and focussing of the curriculum on memorization-type activities on the part of students. principals suggested that the Provincial Examination Program reduce the reliance on multiple-choice items which demand rote memory tasks of students, and replace with items that better demanded higher order cognitive skills.

The reduction of the weighting of the Provincial Exams to 40% was welcome, but further reductions were also recommended.

Some principals suggested the termination of the Provincial Examination Program. Some of these principals would retain the Scholarship Program, and one principal suggested that the universities "..format and pay for their own entrance exams."

Changes in standards for student achievement as a result of the Provincial Examination Program

The views of principals were similar to those of teachers in regard to standards: standards were high and still are. From this stance there is some variation , with a fair proportion of comments supporting each position. They are:

- The standards have increased due to the presence of the Examination Program.
- The standards have changed but not in terms of higher or lower, but different. With the curriculum changed (narrowed, knowledge-centred) standards could be considered lower in that the pursuit of learning outcomes associated with problem-solving, critical and creative thinking have been replaced by lower-order skills of rote-memory.
- The standards have not changed as a result of the Examination Program.

4.8 Focus Groups

The major component of the study was the province-wide survey of students, teachers, parents and administrators by means of questionnaires. The questionnaires were developed through interviews with respondents from the schools and through examination of the research literature. However, it is was thought that the questionnaire data would raise a number of important questions and perhaps would identify some issues we were not included in the questionnaires. To explore these questions a serious of focus groups were conducted around the province; small groups of respondents were asked to meet and discuss the issues raised by the survey.

Focus groups were formed and met in a number of regions throughout B.C. to check the potential of regional variations as listed in Table 4.25.

Table 4.25: Focus Groups

Site
Campbell River SD# 72
Coquitlam SD# 43
Peace River South SD# 59 (Dawson Creek)
Prince George SD# 57
Victoria SD# 61

Procedures

Separate focus groups, each consisting of five members were designed for Grade 12 students, parents of senior high school students, teachers of senior high school, administrators (both principals and central office staff) in each location. A member of the project team met with each focus group separately for about 1 to $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Each focus group member was asked to complete an Impact of Examinations Questionnaire a day or so prior to the session in order to be familiar with the kinds of issues to be raised.

The main areas which were addressed were:

- effects of the examinations upon students;
- effects of the exams upon teachers and teaching;
- effects of the exams upon curriculum;
- effects of the exams upon school operations;
- miscellaneous and unanticipated effects of exams;
- suggested modifications to the examinations program;

- evaluation of exams and the program in general; and
- any other issue any member of the group wished to discuss.

4.8.1 Results

A detailed discussion of the focus groups in this text would be redundant to the questionnaire data. However, Appendix K contains notes and transcripts from the focus groups held around the province.

The input of the participants in the focus groups confirmed the interpretation of the questionnaire data and brought out no unanticipated issues. They did, however, provide numerous anecdotes and descriptions of problems that are of interest. The questionnaire means and distributions tend to mask the fact that, although there may be no overall impact on the system, there may be severe or outstanding impacts to individuals and small groups. The transcripts and summaries in Appendix K are highly recommended to the reader who is interested in particular, rather than general, impacts.

Depending on the location and the particular experiences of individual participants, the focus groups drew attention to particular benefits and deficits of the examination program. The most common and striking theme of all the focus groups was an emphasis on the perception that the curriculum and teaching methods in senior courses are now being totally driven by the examinations and the accompanying tables of specifications.

4.9 Interviews with Employers

Telephone interviews were conducted with personnel officers from a number of major employers (Table 4.26). All of the sampled companies hired high school graduates and leavers. Some of the companies hired individuals still in high school on a part-time or seasonal basis.

High school grades and government examinations were not generally used by employers in selecting individuals for employment. The main educational criterion for employment was whether or not the individual was a high school graduate or not. The fine details of courses taken, grades received, or whether the grade was derived from school-based results or those from a provincial examination were not at issue in these decisions. The only exception to this was the military and only when making decisions in regard to an applicant's suitability for officer training, which involves post-secondary educational enrollment.

The main criteria for employment decisions were appearance, personality, attitude, previous work experience, and any relevant skills training.

Employers did not report any noticeable effects of the Provincial Examination Program and most employers were not even aware that these examinations even existed.

Table 4.26: Employers Interviewed

Name of Employer	*Type of Employer*
Canadian Armed Forces	military
B.C. Hydro	public utility
B.C. Telephone	public utility
Coast Hotels	hotel
Eaton's	retail department store
Fletcher Challenge	forestry
Hasway Resources	mining
MacDonald's	retail fast-food restaurant
MacMillen Blodel	forestry
Provincial Government Service	provincial public service
Save-On Foods	retail food store
Safeway	retail food store
Terrace Bay	mining
Woodward's	retail department store

4.10 Interviews with Admission Officers of Post-Secondary Institutes

Telephone interviews were conducted with 20 admission officers of colleges, institutes and universities in British Columbia (see Table 4.27)

The interview schedule (see Appendix J) included questions on the criteria used for admission, if secondary school results were required and, specifically, if the results of the provincial examinations were used in selection decisions. Further, respondents were asked to comment on any aspect of the Provincial Examination Program that was of particular interest to the institute and any suggested modifications to the Provincial Examination Program.

The responses were generally consistent across all post-secondary institutions. All respondents reported that a variety of criteria were used in making decisions on admissions. Secondary school graduation and grades were common requirements. Also required by some programs within some institutes were letters of reference or portfolios of work. However, secondary graduation and grades were the predominant criteria used. Secondary grades are also used by some institutes for placement of students into particular programs within the institute such as up-grading programs within colleges or limited enrollment programs.

In regard to the provincial examination marks, admission officers rarely consider the marks *per se*. A transcript of the provincial examination results is a requirement of admissions procedures, but the marks themselves are not considered except for "border-line cases". It appears that the provincial examination

Table 4.27: Post-Secondary Officials Interviewed

Name of Post-Secondary Institute
Camosun College
Capilano College
Cariboo College
College of New Caledonia
East Kootenay Community College
Fraser Valley College
Malaspina College
North Island College
Northern Lights College
Northwest Community College
Okanagan College
Selkirk College
Vancouver Community College
British Columbia Institute of Technology
Emily Carr College of Art and Design
Justice Institute of British Columbia
Pacific Marine Training Institute
Simon Fraser University
Trinity Western University
University of British Columbia

results do not form a basis for admissions decisions, but rather serve a confirmatory function.

However, admission officers responded that the Provincial Examination Program has led to more equitable treatment of students and better consistency of information on the achievement of incoming students. Some indicated concern that the recent change to a 40% weighting of the provincial examination mark may adversely affect this consistency.

In general comments, admissions officers found the availability of examinations results was just too late to be of use. Additionally, a number of respondents recommended that communications from the Ministry of Education needs improvement and that consultation on examination issues could be improved.

In summary, it is perceived that the Provincial Examination Program has led to more consistency and equity in admissions procedures for post-secondary institutions, yet the marks themselves are not normally specifically used in admissions decisions.

Chapter 5

Summary and Recommendations

The Provincial Examination Program is a complex activity involving a number of constituent groups consisting of large numbers of individuals, each with a stake in the operation of and outcomes from the program. This is clear from the results reported and described in the previous chapter. The constituent groups include students who must prepare for and write the Provincial Examinations; parents who are interested in their children in this final year of schooling; teachers who provide the learning environment and educational experiences to help their students prepare for the examinations and who take part in the development and administration of the program; principals of the schools in which the learning and teaching take place and in which the examinations are administered; counsellors who assist students with personal problems and provide vocational guidance; superintendents who administer the school districts; employers who play a role in the student's vocational life both during and upon completion of grade 12; and admissions officers of post-secondary institutes who are responsible for decisions regarding grade 12 graduates' further educational involvement. The intent of the present study was to assess the influence of the Provincial Examination Program upon these people and what they do.

To make this assessment, the views and perceptions of these constituent groups were solicited using survey questionnaires and interview schedules developed and tailored to each group. Each questionnaire or interview schedule contained items on a number of specific issues to which respondents were to react in terms of the changes brought about by the introduction of the Provincial Examinations, and the effects of the change upon the educational system. In addition, each respondent was invited to add additional comments about the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the program, and their overall evaluation of the program. Also, a number of employers and admissions officers of post- secondary institutions were interviewed to obtain information regarding their use of the results of the Provincial Examination Program in hiring or admissions processes. In total, completed survey questionnaires were received from 1 833 students, 606 parents, 947 teachers, 160 principals, and 137 counsellors. More than three-quarters of these respondents made additional written comments. These comments can provide the reader with an awareness and appreciation of individual, as opposed to general, perspectives on the effects of the Provincial Examination Program. Fourteen personnel officers from employers in the province and 20 post-secondary admissions officers were interviewed.

The results of our analyses of the responses from the constituent groups were presented and discussed in the previous chapter. Presented in this chapter is an overview of these findings followed by a brief summary. The chapter concludes with two series of recommendations: those directed at modifications of the Provincial Examination Program; and a number related to further research.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The overview of findings is presented in terms of the extent to which the intentions of the Provincial Examination Program have been met, as well as the "general" or "overall" effects of the program on students, teachers, teaching practices and schools, and the use being made of the exams. The overview concludes with a general summary.

It must be remembered that a "summary" masks details and individual results. The Provincial Examination Program not only has effects and implications for the general population, but also has substantial effects on individuals; it is a "high stakes" program for individual people. Examining general trends, which might be interpreted from the total data as having "no overall effect", does not provide an awareness and appreciation of the major effects, both positive and negative, that the program can have on particular students or small groups. Reading the questionnaire comments made by individuals (included in Section 4.7 at the end of this chapter), and perusing the interview transcripts (included in Appendix B and Appendix K) will give the reader a better understanding of the serious effects and consequences the Provincial Examination Program can have, and has had, on particular individuals.

5.1.1 Intentions

One of the stated intentions of the Provincial Examination Program was to enhance the equity of treatment students received from post-secondary institutions (colleges and universities), and employers. In regard to post-secondary institutions, there is a perception of enhanced consistency but the admissions officers do not generally use provincial examination marks in making admission decisions. The educational criteria used for admission are secondary graduation status and grades. Employers of high school graduates tend not use the results of the Examination Program in the decisions regarding selection of students for employment. If educational criteria are applied, employers consider only general secondary school graduation status, rather than grades on individual courses.

Another intention of the program was to cause a closer adherence to the Provincial Curriculum. It appears that this intention, too, has been met to a considerable extent, and the effect is generally viewed as being beneficial to the educational system. However, the associated narrowing of the content of instruction has been viewed as a negative aspect of the Provincial Examination Program.

In regard to the intention of providing an increased challenge to students, many respondents indicated that students had been provided with additional challenge, to "some extent". The effect was reported as being moderately beneficial. However, in written comments and interviews, students often referred to the increased motivation, and their increased work and study as benefits of the Examination Program.

The Examination Program was also intended to enhance the status of the teaching profession. In this, the program has not delivered in the view of most respondents. The program was also intended to enhance the confidence of teachers with respect to curriculum and evaluation. Respondents indicated that this had been achieved "to some extent".

Respondents of all constituent groups were somewhat ambivalent in commenting on the effect of the Examination Program on their own standards of educational achievement. Most indicated that their standards had been high prior to the introduction of the Examination Program, many then said their standards had been maintained or had risen slightly, and fewer said that standards had decreased. In summary, there was no clear direction as to the effects of the Provincial Examination Program upon individuals' standards for student achievement.

5.1.2 Students

The Examination Program has led to a noted increase in the level of stress in the lives of grade 12 students. This is viewed as the major problem with the program from the perspective of the students themselves. A few respondents noted that there were other likely sources contributing to the stress felt by students, including the fact that grade 12 is the final year of the students' public educational program and most students would be heading toward full-time employment, further education, or new, but unknown fields. Nonetheless, the questionnaire data and the written comments in particular indicate that stress is a significant factor associated with the Examination Program.

On the plus side, the program has led to students working harder, studying more and increasing their apparent sense of responsibility — all characteristics which are viewed positively by the respondents. Additionally, in general, students' extra-curricular activities do not seem to be greatly affected by the Provincial Examination Program.

There were concerns expressed in regard to the examinations and the issue of fairness. The major concern was based on the structure of the examination itself. Concentration of so much of the student's school "career" into a single two hour test worries respondents. A common example offered was that of the student, whose performance all year has been satisfactory, but can have an "off day" or experience extreme anxiety in an examination situation, perform poorly on the exam, and end up with a low final grade. That is not seen as fair. From another view, students can "slack off" all year then write the Provincial Examination and pass. That is not seen as fair either. Another concern regarding fairness is associated with the differences in the difficulty of the examinations from one administration to the next, and the "scaling" of the marks. Respondents pointed out that this raised further questions of fairness regarding the Examination Program.

Students have also been influenced by the Examination Program to become more "test-wise", more attentive to, and knowledgeable about, the tests themselves. There has been more attention paid to test taking skills, and more practice in writing formal tests at the grade 12 level, and this has trickled down to the lower grades within the schools.

5.1.3 Teaching Practice

In the view of many teachers, principals, counsellors and superintendents, the Provincial Examination Program has had a major influence on the teaching practices within grade 12 classrooms in that the examination has become the focus of instructional content — in effect, the examinations result in "teaching to the test", or "what's on the examination is what's in the grade 12 program." However, what is demanded by the examination tends to be a narrow sampling of course content that allows little flexibility in approach. The examinations also tend to force a focus on memorization of knowledge — recall of course related information — as opposed to critical thinking and problem solving types of processing.

More time is now spent on test-related activities in schools. These activities include more time spent on examination coaching by the teachers, more use of out-of-class tutorials, more time spent on testing within classrooms with more tests, more use of multiple-choice items, and less use of written assignments.

The Provincial Examination Program has affected the selection of courses by students, with an apparent increase in the selection of non-examinable courses. Since the examinable courses are generally viewed as more difficult, students seem to feel that they can reduce their workload by selecting non-examinable courses. This is supported by the reported difference in "status" of courses with examinable subjects viewed as having higher status than non-examinables.

The Provincial Exams, however, have not greatly affected several aspects of teaching practices such as class size, and interaction between grade 12 teachers and their students, or amongst teachers at different grade levels or in different subject areas.

5.1.4 Teachers

A major effect of the Examination Program upon teachers is the dissatisfaction related to the aforementioned narrowing of the curriculum. This has led to greater standardization of the program, which is viewed as a benefit by many respondents. In regard to effects on teachers, this has led to a reduced flexibility to choose the topics to work with in a particular curriculum, and the methods used and the depth with which these can be covered. Teachers are more obliged to follow an external description of the instructional program. In this way, the control of the course has been removed from the hands of the teachers.

This removal of a sense of control may have contributed to the reported negative effects of the Provincial Examination Program upon the morale of teachers and to the reported increase in stress teachers experience. However, comments from teachers indicated that there are a number of factors, in addition to the Examination Program, that have led to the increasing sense of stress experienced by teachers.

5.1.5 Schools

Schools have been affected by the examinations most directly through their actual involvement with the administration of the examinations and the preparation of students to write them. This has resulted in problems associated with overall school timetabling.

Schools have been prompted to change due to the provision of additional preparation for students writing Provincial Examinations. One of the changes reported was the provision, to a greater extent than in the past, of school-wide examination programs at the grade 12 level, and also in lower grades. Another change was the increase in the amount of coaching or out-of-class tutoring provided by teachers.

Respondents related the Provincial Examination Program to the accountability of schools. However, the issue was not directly addressed in the sense of answering the question: "Are the schools more accountable because of the Provincial Exams?" The comments by parents suggest that the Examination Program gives them more "comfort" about the schools through the standardization of the grade 12 program that the Examination Program engenders. The "standardization" of the curriculum was viewed by parents a benefit of the Examination Program and that this standardization leads to more equity in the education provided to students. Although the questionnaire results suggest that the schools are more accountable; parents, teachers, counsellors, principals and superintendents report that perceptions of confidence in schools and of the effectiveness of schools has not changed. This seems to suggest that confidence in the schools has been relatively high in the past and the changes effected by the Provincial Examination Program have maintained this level of confidence.

5.1.6 Utilization of Examination Results

The use of examination materials is quite evident in the classroom — the preparation of students for the exams. Copies of old examinations and descriptions of examination structure (that is, *Examination Specifications*) serve as bases for developing course materials and as practice tests in grade 12 classrooms. This use of examination materials was viewed positively by respondents.

The use of examination results for evaluating teachers or schools was generally viewed negatively; as being detrimental to the educational system. Although there were consistent views regarding the effects of of these practices (generally detrimental), there were differences across respondent groups in regard to the amount of teacher and school evaluation occurring. Teachers considered that there was more teacher evaluation (based on examination results) occurring than did either principals or superintendents. Related to this is the finding that all respondent groups reported a substantial amount of comparison of examination results across schools, districts and the province. This situation of differing views on the uses made of examination results and the consistent views in regard to the amount of comparative interpretation of examination results suggests that there is no systematic procedure(s) for interpretation of examination results at a level of aggregation beyond the student level.

5.1.7 Provincial Examination Program

Overall, the Provincial Examination Program appears to be relatively well accepted. The evaluations given by respondents in their written comments were essentially positive. However, a number of modifications were suggested. The most frequently suggested change was a decrease in the weighting given the Provincial Examination mark in relation to the school mark in determining a student's final grade. Many respondents noted that the recently implemented reduction in Provincial Examination weighting from 50% to 40% was appropriate as it stood, and many others said that it was a move in the right direction but further reductions should be taken.

Other main targets for modifications were the examinations themselves, and the examination procedures. The examinations were generally viewed as tests of recall, demanding that students memorize information from grade 12 courses in order to obtain a good score. Many respondents, particularly teachers and principals, suggested that a better focus for examinations would be on critical thinking skills and problem solving.

There were mixed views on a number of other examination related issues. One centred on the procedures used in the development of the examinations such as the formation and operations of the committees that develop the examinations. Some teachers viewed the procedures quite negatively whereas others viewed their participation in the examination program as a very positive professional development experience. However, it should be noted that the majority of responding teachers (approximately 65%) have not served on either Examination Development Committees nor on Examination Marking Committees. A number of teachers were critical of the "scaling" of the examination scores before deriving a student's final grade. They viewed the procedure as undermining the credibility the results and therefore the Examination Program itself.

In regard to the examination procedures, time was a focus of concern. In relation to the classroom, teachers and students noted the press of time in covering all of the material necessary for preparation for the examination — there was no time left in class to pursue alternate topics. In relation to the school, principals noted the timetabling problems associated with the Examination Program. In relation to the examinations themselves, students noted time pressures of two forms: by having to write examinations scheduled so close together that a student "...could not catch her breath" between exams; and the two hours allotted to write an examination was not sufficient. In addition, some parents noted that the examination results were available too late to be of use in application for entry to college or university.

A number of respondents, parents in particular, pointed out that the Examination Program was developed for the academic student, those who intend to go on to further education upon graduation from high school. Yet, the majority of students do not go on to post-secondary education. The creation and implementation of a high profile Examination Program for a minority of students, with no comparable attention given to the majority of students leaving the educational system, was viewed as somewhat of an inequity.

5.2 Recommendations

The following ten recommendations are based upon the major patterns emerging from the findings of the study and are considered by the research team to be constructive, feasible suggestions for improvement of the British Columbia educational system. Thus, taking into account all of the information collected and processed in this study we first and foremost recommend that:

1. THE PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION PROGRAM BE MAINTAINED.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that the Provincial Examination Program is functioning as an accepted part of the educational system in British Columbia. Although there was a small number of respondents who suggested that the program be discontinued, the responses and comments from the majority of respondents indicated that the program is working well. However, most respondents did suggest modifications that could be implemented to improve the performance of the Provincial Examination Program.

The following recommendations are made in the spirit of improving a program that is essentially "on track." The next five recommendations are suggestions for modification to the Provincial Examination Program with particular attention to the improvement of communication between the Ministry of Education and the educators responsible for the implementation and conduct of the educational programs and practices "in the field." The final set of four recommendations are descriptions of research needed to clarify some of the issues identified in this study. Each recommendation is followed by an expanded description and rationale.

> 2. THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SHOULD CLEARLY ARTICULATE THE PURPOSES AND THE APPROPRIATE USES OF THE PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION PROGRAM.

The descriptions should be specifically developed for different audiences: educators, students, parents and the public. The Ministry should develop a clear and comprehensive description of what the program is supposed to be doing, and also those things it should not be doing. Examples of intended uses should be provided.

There appears to be various interpretations of the purposes of the program and its functions. The purposes of the program most often identified by respondents were to provide a common measure of student achievement, to encourage the implementation of the provincial curriculum and to enhance accountability of teachers and schools. There were differences in the perceived amount of examination use for the purposes of teacher and school evaluation. The areas of accountability, and teacher and school evaluation are complex and fraught with sensitive issues. In our view, ambiguity of purpose serves no beneficial function. Thus, we recommend the development and intensive, effective communication of clearly articulated purposes and appropriate uses for the results of the Provincial Examination program. In particular, the statement of purpose and description of procedures should be distributed to each and every secondary teacher in the province.

> 3. THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SHOULD ENHANCE THE PRESENCE OF HIGHER ORDER COGNITIVE SKILLS ON THE PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS.

The Ministry of Education, in its annual publication *Report to Schools*, describes the structure of the examination in each subject area in terms of the kinds of cognitive skills the examination demands from students. The examinations are described as including both memorization and higher order skills. Respondents' comments commonly indicated that respondents favoured an emphasis on critical thinking and problem solving, yet the examinations were focussed upon rote memory and recall. In regard to the student abilities being assessed on the Provincial Examinations, there is a contradiction between what is perceived by the respondents, and the intended design of the Provincial Examination Program. It seems that in the view of the respondents and the Ministry, the examinations should be assessing higher order cognitive skills, but in the view of the respondents the examinations are not doing so. Further analysis should be undertaken to assess the description of examination items in the *Report to Schools*. If the current descriptions are confirmed, steps should be taken to communicate the information to educators. If there proves to be an overabundance of recall-type items, steps should be taken to develop higher order items into the examinations and the development should be communicated to the field. Investigation should be conducted into the kinds of tasks the examinations are demanding of students and into the development of test formats that encourage critical thinking, problem solving and other higher order processing.

4. THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SHOULD CLARIFY THE RELATIONSHIP EXPECTED BETWEEN THE PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION MARKS AND SCHOOL BASED MARKS, AND COMMENT ON APPROPRIATE INTERPRETATIONS THAT CAN BE MADE ON THESE MARKS AND ANY DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN THEM.

The educators involved in the study commented in interviews that there was concern, particularly among teachers, regarding a perceived desire for a close match between teacher awarded marks and the marks derived from the Provincial Examination Program. They reported that teachers felt that their marks should closely approximate those of the Provincial Examinations.

The Provincial Examination is a two hour test on a sampling of knowledge and skills within a grade 12 course, whereas the teacher mark is derived from a broader and more comprehensive sampling of the same course using a variety of assessment procedures. Certainly there should be a positive relationship between the two scores, but it is the opinion of the research team that the results of the Provincial Examinations should not be expected to mirror those of the teacher. The position of the Ministry should be clearly communicated to the field.

5. THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SHOULD CLARIFY THE PRACTICE OF "SCALING" USED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FINAL EXAMINATION MARK.

Responding teachers expressed concern regarding the procedures of "scaling" of the marks derived from the Provincial Examination Program. The scaling of the marks was viewed as degrading the quality and validity of examination results. In the view of the research team, the scaling or transformation of examination results is a necessary practice. It is done in the interests of fairness, allowing for differences in examination difficulty one administration to another. The scaling procedures used by the Ministry should be clearly described and illustrated for teachers in order to clarify the situation and reduce the misunderstanding that appears to exist. Again all communication in this matter should be distributed to each and every secondary teacher in the province.

> 6. THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SHOULD CLARIFY THE PURPOSES AND OPERATIONS OF THE EXAMINATION DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEES AND THE MARKING COMMITTEES.

Teachers expressed mixed views about the committees of teachers involved in the development and marking of the Provincial Examinations. There was some suspicion in regard to the composition and operation of the Examination Development Committees. On the other hand, participation in the Marking Committees was viewed as a very positive professional development activity. Since most teachers (approximately 65%) have not participated in either examination development or marking, steps should be taken to encourage greater participation by all grade 12 teachers.

In order to enhance teacher understanding of the Examination Program, and perhaps lead to a reduction of suspicion and increase in participation, the purposes and procedures of examination development and marking should be fully described. This description be distributed to each secondary teacher in British Columbia.

5.2.1 Recommendations for Further Research

This study has exposed several additional areas and aspects of the examination program that seem important and have impact on the educational system and stake-holders. However, these aspects should be further investigated before direct recommendations or decisions are made.

> 7. RESEARCH SHOULD BE INITIATED TO INVESTIGATE THE STRESS ON STUDENTS AND TEACHERS THAT IS ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION PROGRAM.

Stress was a frequently mentioned problem associated with the Provincial Examination Program. Students in particular, and teachers to a lesser extent, reported that stress was a major problem associated with the Provincial Examinations. Study should be undertaken to investigate the nature of this stress, the extent to which it is experienced and by whom, the effects of the stress, and the factors contributing to its development and abatement.

8. RESEARCH SHOULD BE INITIATED TO INVESTIGATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH THERE IS DIFFERENTIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE EXAMINABLE AND NON-EXAMINABLE COURSES, AND THE ENSUING EFFECTS.

The findings indicate that the "status" of the examinable courses has increased and that of the non-examinables has decreased. This was viewed as detrimental to the educational system. Further, there was some indication that course selection by grade 12 students has been affected by the presence of the Provincial Examination Program. Study should be undertaken to investigate the extent to which there is differential functioning of examinable and non-examinable course and the effects of this differential functioning.

9. RESEARCH SHOULD BE INITIATED TO STUDY THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION PROGRAM HAS AFFECTED THE CONTENT OF COURSES AND THE TESTING PRACTICES OF THE GRADES PRECEDING GRADE 12.

There were indications in the findings that the Examination Program had effected the lower grades through school-wide testing programs, increased focus on test-taking skills, and increased attention to subject matter related to grade 12 examinable courses. Further investigation of the extent and nature of these practices should be undertaken.

10. RESEARCH SHOULD BE INITIATED TO STUDY THE EXTENT TO WHICH TUTORIAL ASSISTANCE IS PROVIDED TO STUDENTS BOTH WITHIN SCHOOLS AND COMMERCIALLY.

There was a discrepancy between parents and students in regard to the perceived extent to which tutors were used by grade 12 students in preparing for Provincial Examinations. There could be differing interpretations of the term "tutorial assistance". One interpretation could be the additional assistance provided by teachers within the school at lunch hour or after school. Another interpretation could be the use of external tutorial assistance on a commercial basis. If the use of commercial tutors is prevalent, and if they are effective in increasing examination performance, then students with low levels of financial support are placed in a position of disadvantage by the Provincial Examination Program. Further investigation of the use of tutors by grade 12 students should be undertaken.

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Appendix A

Preliminary Description of Examination Impacts

1. Teaching practices
    - course presentation
        - sequencing of topics
        - inclusion of material
        - lecturing/labs/field trips?
        - EXAM PREPARATION PROCEDURES
    - instructional style
    - testing practices
        - any Exam related modifications to your testing practices?
            - number of tests
            - formats
            - source of test questions
            - use of common exams at school or district level
    - do you attempt to parallel Provincial exams or try to test other kinds of student abilities?
        - do you think your marks should parallel the Prov Exam marks?
        - have you changed the way you mark tests?
        - have you changed the way you report to parents?
    - grading practices
        - have you changed the way in which you weight your tests? How do you combine the different scores (tests, projects, labs) to come up with a final mark? Has this been affected by the Provincial Exams?

- tasks
    - eg: proctoring exams marking and recording

2. Course offerings
    - academic
    - options and locally developed
3. Curriculum
    - aligning curriculum to exams
    - cognitive skill focus
        - ie: knowledge vs. higher order
    - general focus
        - cognitive/affective/psychomotor
        - e.g., science labs, language labs
4. Course selection
    - by students
5. Climate — class, school, district
    - the profession
    - the subject
6. Utilization of results
    - what is used
    - what is available
    - how do you use
    - how does school use
    - how do students use
    - how parents use
    - how does district use
    - who are results discussed with?
        - central office
        - trustees
        - department heads
        - staff
        - students
        - media

    - are the results made public? Why? How?

7. Accountability
    - teacher
    - school
    - district
8. Scholarship program
9. Students
    - extracurricular
    - test anxiety
    - academic focus
10. Weighting
    - 50/50
    - 60/40
11. Ancillary effects
    - coaching — in-school & commercial
    - inservice programs for teachers
    - counseling programs for students
    - summer schools
    - exam committees
        - marking
        - exam developers
12. Trickle-down effects
    - effects upon the lower grades
13. School and district policy
    - hiring practices
    - teaching assignments
        - within district
        - within school
    - school organization
    - class size

- timetabling

14. Intentions

    - Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students by PSI's and potential employers?
    - Is the provincial curriculum being more closely followed?
    - Are the students provided with additional challenge?
    - Do teachers have enhanced confidence in their own abilities in curriculum and evaluation?
    - What are the benefits/problems of the exam program?
    - What is your evaluation of the program?
    - How would you change the program?

Appendix B

Summarization of In-school interviews

B.1 Grade 12 Students, June, 1989

The most prominent and recurring issue was STRESS — the stress and "chaos" the final exams cause in the life of grade 12 students. Stress was reported to the level affecting sleeping and eating patterns.

An issue closely related to the above was the "do or die" nature of the exam situation. Students viewed the exams, because they counted for 50% of the final mark, as a one-shot attempt in a two hour period to make the year or not. There is a lot on the line when you sit down to write the exam, you can make or break all of your academic effort for the year in that brief time span. The availability of August exams was not viewed as a fallback position since you would forget all the stuff in the one and a half month delay.

The instructional focus throughout grade 12 is THE EXAM for that particular subject. During class diversions into what in grade eleven may be an interesting side trail, cannot be tolerated since you (the class) have to get back on task. The faster and more efficiently you complete the course (as officially outlined) the more time you have to review before exams.

One school conducts formal examinations in January and June for grades 8 through 12. The students view this as preparation for the Grade 12 Provincials. Grade 12 students also review and write old Provincial exams.

Other forms of exam preparation reported were in-class focus on exams and writing old Provincial exams under exam conditions. Some teachers also held coaching sessions after school for students. There were no external coaching or tutoring practices reported.

Many students view the exams as somewhat unrelated to achievement — as unfair measures of what is to be learned in school:

- a focus on crammed information and the rapid emission of this information ("spewing out information") in the 2 hours allowed for exams — the time allowed for the exam (2 hours) was viewed by students as too short for the kinds of responses required.

- the format of the exam was also viewed as inappropriate — researched and reasoned responses were not encouraged by the exams. A suggestion was the release of items in early June for response on the exam in late June.

- impersonality of the exam process — you are only a number to a faceless marker.

- "two hours to sum up a whole year"

- no account is taken of effort — students viewed effort as important in the determination of grade.

- technically, the exams had problems. It was noted that Algebra had a raw score pass score of 23% — how could this be a good exam when by guessing (on MCQ's) you could get around 25%. (A good point I thought.)

Students reported that extracurricular activities were curtailed in grade 12 but there did not seem to be any pronounced negativity in regard to this.

The main direct use of examination scores was for application to university. In regard to employment, the students reported that grades were not considered — rather, personal factors, the kinds of course taken and whether or not you graduated were the main interest of employers.

B.2 Principals, June, 1989

Examinations tend to dominate the thinking of grade 12 students and teachers.

Teaching to the exam is certainly a common element of instructional practice.

Trickle-down effects:

- one school has formal examination administration at both January and June for all students in grades 8 through 12. The proportion of the exam mark counting for the final grade increases from grade 8 (approx. 30% of final grade) to grade 12. For the lower grades this has resulted in all programs being completed and examined BEFORE the grade 12 exam administration — ie: a shortening of the school year.

- Some subject areas (departments) have developed curriculum scope and sequence to insure coordination of lower grade program with the grade 12 curriculum.

The August exam period is generally not viewed as a visible nor viable second chance for exam performance — the June exams are viewed by students as a one-shot deal, make-or-break effort.

To some extent this is related to the view generally held that the exams focus upon knowledge retention on the part of students:

- the curriculum has to be covered
- if you don't make it in June, August is useless because within a day or so after the exam — it's all gone, the tanks are empty — so by August nothing is in there.

Utilization: The administration reviews school results to look for anomolies — this is particularly difficult in a small school where the number of students in the grade 12 class is small and therfore the results can vary greatly one year to the next.

Teachers use results, particularly the reports analyzed by skill level.

The Board is very interested in exam reports as a means of evaluating teachers and schools, tending to view summary exam data in isolation from other considerations.

The reports provided by the Ministry of Education are viewed quite positively — good reporting.

The participation of teachers in the marking committees is viewed quite positively — professional development, particularly in the sense of getting a handle on the curriculum — what the course is about from a provincial perspective, how the exams works, how the scoring works.

Impact of student extracurricular activities — students have to be careful as to what they do in regard to effects on studies.

For "borderline" students the exams do have an impact on course selection — the examinables are viewed as being tougher, more difficult than the non-examinables. Students may be led towards the easier subjects.

Tutoring — aimed at exam performance — is prevalent.

Equity: yes the exams have provided better equity particularly in regard to post-secondary admissions.

Provincial curriculum: yes, the exams have led to a common provincial curriculum, but whether this is desirable is a separate issue.

Additional challenge: yes, but for some students the challenge is positive in that the student can achieve and succeed, but for some the challenge is more of an obstacle perhaps to the extent of frustration.

The exams are generally viewed as a good thing — putting some real world challenge/obstacles into the schools — the kinds of competition that is found in later life. The handling of pressure, performing under pressure is a good experience for students.

To improve: The emphasis on lower level skills (recall) should be reduced with greater emphasis on thought questions — creative thinking — problem solving.

B.3 Teachers, June, 1989

With specific reference to the English 12 exam, the exam does not lead to common curriculum since it is skills-based rather than content-based. This results in a general lack of focus and therefore difficulty in deciphering what English 12 is about. However, with English Literature, the exam is too tightly bound to the curriculum and results in too narrow a curriculum — too much emphasis on recall of information.

Underlying the above is a general need to provide better description of rationale of the exams and the curriculum it is to measure.

Utilization: Yes, the exam results are closely scrutinized by teachers and are definitely viewed as having teacher evaluation connotations — the evaluation "loading" varies by teacher and by administrator. Those teachers who have consistently low results relative to other subjects (one teacher per subject in the school) are quite sensitive to results. Teachers with consistently high results are viewed positively by colleagues (and others presumably). Administrators vary in their use and interpretation of results — some being rather context-free and "bottom line" oriented, others being more apt to place results in context with knowledge of general student characteristics and other sources of information on achievement.

Teachers administer previous June exam to class in the first week of September to affect attitudes of class (get serious about studies this year), and to provide some bases for focusing instruction — identify those areas the students are weak in (as an analytic tool).

Results are of major use to students in regard to post-secondary institutions (PSI) admissions.

Tutoring is prevalent. Particularly so for those students with PSI aspirations and overseas students whose visas are dependent on continued studies.

Changes: Better linkage and communications with Ministry regarding exams: such things as a phone number of a Ministry person to talk to, ask questions about exams (details and general issues), access to workshops presented by Ministry personnel to clarify issues and serves as input sessions.

Appendix C

Student Questionnaire

All figures recorded in this appendix are *valid* percentage of respondents, rounded to the nearest whole percent. *Valid* percents do NOT include omits, "I don't know", or "N/A" in the base of calculations.

Provincial Examination Impact

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

N= 1833 Note: Figures in valid percent (%)

Throughout this questionnaire we would like you to compare courses you are taking that have a provincial examination to other courses you are taking or have taken in the past. Please indicate the difference in courses with Provincial Examinations AND whether you think the difference is beneficial or detrimental to your education. Please write your comments in the open-ended section at the end of the questionnaire. Your comments are most welcome and will be added to our database.

DIFFERENCE						In courses I am taking that have provincial examinations (compared to other courses) ...	EFFECT					
Much Less		No Difference		Much More			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
1	2	3	4	5	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
2	3	27	36	32	3.94	1. I am expected to memorize information ...	7	17	29	33	15	3.31
6	8	49	24	13	3.30	2. I am given the opportunity to learn problem-solving skills ...	3	8	42	30	17	3.49
3	7	35	33	22	3.64	3. I am encouraged to develop critical-thinking skills ...	4	7	28	34	27	3.73
5	7	39	29	21	3.54	3a I feel challenged by my teachers to learn ...	6	9	35	28	22	3.52
3	5	43	22	26	3.61	4. I am expected to use my textbooks ...	4	8	44	27	17	3.46
7	8	47	24	13	3.28	5. I use supplementary course materials ...	4	8	50	27	11	3.33
14	10	43	20	12	3.06	6. I spend time in the library researching information ...	7	9	46	25	13	3.27
17	14	39	18	11	2.93	7. I spend time in small-group learning ...	10	12	42	22	15	3.21
2	4	45	25	23	3.62	8. I spend time in full-class or whole-class instruction ...	4	10	44	27	16	3.40
26	4	52	10	7	2.66	9. I use out-of-school tutors ...	12	6	61	12	9	3.00
4	4	22	26	45	4.05	10. I spend time on homework ...	6	9	22	33	31	3.75
7	10	31	28	25	3.53	11. I spend time on written assignments involving creative or research-based activities ...	6	10	34	31	19	3.47
40	10	38	7	5	2.25	12. My class takes field trips ...	20	12	47	9	12	2.79
17	9	40	20	14	3.05	13. My classes do laboratories ...	9	9	46	23	13	3.21
6	11	37	28	18	3.41	14. I spend time on worksheet-type activities ...	5	10	45	31	11	3.33
14	15	43	20	8	2.94	15. I spend time on cooperative projects ...	8	13	47	23	9	3.13
3	7	27	30	32	3.82	16. The number of classroom tests is ...	8	14	30	32	16	3.34
8	13	31	23	25	3.44	17. The number of multiple-choice items on my classroom tests is...	9	13	37	25	16	3.26
8	10	37	25	20	3.39	18. The number of open-ended items on my classroom tests is ...	9	13	40	26	13	3.21

USE OF EXAMINATION MATERIALS

FREQUENCY							EFFECT					
N/A	Never	Seldom	Some	Often			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
N/A	1	2	3	4	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
7	8	16	38	39	3.08	1. My teachers use old Provincial Examinations in class ...	5	6	11	27	51	4.13
6	11	20	38	30	2.88	2. My teachers tell us how previous classes did on the Grade 12 Provincial Examinations ...	7	7	47	24	16	3.37
3	4	12	25	59	3.39	3. My teachers emphasize the importance of the Grade 12 Provincial Examinations ...	8	9	25	31	28	3.62
5	13	24	35	28	2.77	4. My teachers teach us how to write examinations ...	12	8	15	25	40	3.74

GENERAL EFFECTS

Compared to previous years in school ...

CHANGE								EFFECT					
	1	2	3	4	5	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
								Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
Much Worse / No Change / Much Better	3	5	19	34	40	4.03	1. My own sense of responsibility (for learning) is ...	5	7	19	33	37	3.90
	3	5	37	32	24	3.70	2. My relationship with my teachers generally is ...	4	5	36	29	27	3.70
Much Lower / No Change / Much Higher	7	11	29	32	22	3.51	3. My morale as a student is ...	8	10	31	28	22	3.47
	7	13	39	30	12	3.25	4. The morale of my fellow students is ...	9	11	43	24	14	3.23
	14	15	38	21	12	3.00	5. The spirit of the school is ...	15	14	41	18	13	2.99
Much Worse / No Change / Much Better	18	18	36	17	10	2.83	6. My feeling about those subjects which DO have Provincial Examinations compared to those subjects which DO NOT.	16	17	42	16	9	2.84
Much Lower / No Change / Much Higher	4	8	25	40	23	3.69	7. My motivation to learn, generally, is ...	7	10	25	34	26	3.62
	9	6	12	20	53	4.04	8. The stress I feel about school is ...	42	25	15	11	7	2.14
Much Worse / No Change / Much Better	12	10	39	21	18	3.22	9. My feeling toward obtaining a Provincial Scholarship is ...	13	11	42	19	16	3.15
Much Less / No Change / Much Greater							10. What are the effects on the participation of Grade 12 students in the following extracurricular activities?						
	13	16	31	19	21	3.20	a. School Sports	12	15	33	19	20	3.21
	15	15	45	18	9	2.91	b. Drama	12	11	51	16	11	3.03
	13	17	47	14	8	2.87	c. Music	11	12	51	15	11	3.03
	14	13	43	20	11	2.99	d. School Government	11	11	45	19	14	3.12
	15	17	41	18	10	2.92	e. School Clubs	11	14	44	20	11	3.07
	11	12	24	22	31	3.50	f. Part-time Employment	16	21	28	18	17	3.00
	16	10	40	21	13	3.05	g. Study Groups	10	10	40	21	19	3.27

INTENTIONS OF THE PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS PROGRAM

The Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program was introduced in the 1983/84 school year. Please indicate the extent to which you perceive its stated intentions have been achieved and the effect upon the B.C. educational system.

CHANGE					INTENTIONS	EFFECT					
Mean	I Don't Know ?	Not at All 1	To Some Extent 2	Yes Definitely 3		Very Detrimental 1	2	No Effect 3	4	Very Beneficial 5	Mean
1.98	29	20	61	19	1. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying to university?	12	12	34	31	12	3.21
1.93	31	25	58	17	2. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying to colleges?	8	12	41	29	11	3.22
1.65	32	49	36	14	3. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying for employment?	9	11	54	18	9	3.06
2.29	34	11	50	39	4. Is the provincial curriculum being more closely followed within the schools of British Columbia?	9	10	40	29	12	3.25
2.17	14	15	53	32	5. Are the students provided with additional challenge?	9	14	28	36	13	3.29
1.92	39	27	55	19	6. Do teachers have enhanced confidence in their own abilities in the areas of curriculum and evaluation?	10	11	45	23	12	3.17
1.65	32	47	40	12	7. Has the status of the teaching profession been enhanced?	14	11	45	21	9	3.00

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Have you ever had a problem in selecting courses because of final provincial exams? (e.g., timetabling, number of sections offered, etc.)

12 Often 31 Sometimes 20 Rarely 37 Never

2. Are you planning to attend University or College? 77 Yes 10 Pretty sure 10 Maybe 3 No

3. How many Grade 12 Provincial Exams will you write this year? 48 1 to 3 49 4 to 6 3 7 to 9 0 10+

4. How many Prov. Scholarship Exams are you planning to write this year? 48 0 36 1 to 3 16 4 +

5. Do you talk to your brothers and sisters in lower grades about the Grade 12 Provincial Exams?

4 Often 28 Sometimes 39 Never 29 I don't have any brothers or sisters

6. What is your gender? 46 Male 54 Female

7. Do you consider your school to be ... 33 Urban 45 Suburban 23 Rural

8. How many Grade 12 Students are enrolled in your school?

3 0 to 50 37 51 to 200 32 201 to 350 16 351 to 500 8 501 to 1000 5 over 1000

Please write your comments in the following space . . .

What are the benefits/problems of the Provincial Examination Program?

Benefits:

Problems:

What is your evaluation of the Provincial Examination Program?

How would you change the program?

Have your standards for your achievement changed as a result of the Provincial Examination Program?

Appendix D

Parent Questionnaire

All figures recorded in this appendix are *valid* percentage of respondents, rounded to the nearest whole percent. *Valid* percents do NOT include omits, "I don't know", or "N/A" in the base of calculations.

Provincial Examination Impact

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE

N=608 All figures in valid percent (%)

In order to better interpret the results of the questionnaire, we would like to know more about our respondents. Please answer the question below. Please use pencil and fill in the bubbles completely.

Did you, as a student, write senior (Grade 12,13) or school leaving examinations? Yes 66 No 34

How long have you lived in British Columbia? 91 over 7 years 8 1 to 7 years 1 just this year

You are asked to indicate first your perceptions of the CHANGE the Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program has had upon Grade 12 students or their school, and second the EFFECT you feel this has had on them.

We have attempted to identify the major areas of examination impact, but should you have concerns not included in the items, please write your comments in the open-ended section at the end of the questionnaire. Your comments are most welcome and will be added to our database.

In some areas you may not feel knowledgeable and not wish to respond. For this reason we have provided the NO RESPONSE option.

CHANGE								EFFECT					
	Much Less		No Change		Much Greater	No Response		Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
Mean	1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	Mean
3.49	7	9	35	26	23	11	1. Grade 12 students' motivation to learn is now...	9	10	32	25	24	3.45
3.59	8	7	30	27	28	9	2. The amount of homework Grade 12 students do is now...	10	12	29	28	30	3.36
3.53	7	8	34	28	23	11	3. Grade 12 students' sense of responsibility is now...	9	9	35	27	21	3.40
4.17	2	3	18	30	48	10	4. The stress I perceive in Grade 12 students is now...	29	32	22	14	4	2.31
2.96	15	15	44	13	14	47	5. The participation of Grade 12 students in the following extra-curricular activities is now...	13	17	45	13	12	2.94
2.89	16	16	44	12	12	19	a. School Sports	10	14	51	13	12	3.03
2.86	13	16	50	13	7	29	b. Drama	6	13	59	13	9	3.07
2.91	13	16	47	14	10	25	c. Music	7	13	55	14	10	3.07
2.83	13	16	53	11	7	25	d. School Government	11	11	55	12	10	2.99
2.72	18	19	45	9	9	25	e. School Clubs	10	14	54	13	9	2.95
3.46	11	9	31	20	29	17	f. Part-time Employment	12	21	37	15	15	3.00
3.05	14	15	40	17	15	28	g. Study Groups	8	10	45	17	19	3.29
3.49	11	6	32	26	25	36	6. The use of out-of-school tutors by Grade 12 students is now...	9	11	42	20	19	3.29
3.13	15	11	34	28	12	14	7. The effectiveness of the schools is now...	14	13	33	27	14	3.13

CHANGE								EFFECT					
	Much Less		No Change		Much Greater	No Response		Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	Mean
Mean	1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
3.31	16	8	28	26	23	16	8. The accountability of schools is now ...	16	10	30	27	17	3.19
2.85	17	17	40	16	10	15	9. The overall spirit of the school is now...	17	16	41	15	11	2.88
2.88	19	14	39	17	11	9	10. My confidence in the schools is now...	18	15	35	20	10	2.88

Do you have any children in grades K to 11? 58 Yes 42 No

If yes, Do you feel that they are influenced by the Grade 12 Provincial Exams before they reach grade 12? 44 Yes 56 No

If yes, please indicate how.

INTENTIONS OF THE PROVINCIAL EXAMINATION PROGRAM

The Provincial Grade 12 Examinations Program was introduced in the 1983/84 school year. Please indicate the extent to which you perceive its stated intentions have been achieved and the effect upon the B.C. educational system.

CHANGE					INTENTIONS	EFFECT					
	I Don't Know	Not at all	To Some Extent	Yes Definitely		Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
Mean	?	1	2	3		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
2.01	33	25	48	27	1. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying to university?	11	8	27	35	19	3.43
2.01	34	25	49	26	2. Has the examination program led to more equitable treament of students applying to colleges?	9	9	30	33	18	3.41
1.55	35	58	29	13	3. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying for employment?	8	8	58	17	9	3.11
2.20	45	14	51	34	4. Is the provincial curriculum being more closely followed within the schools of British Columbia?	10	11	34	30	15	3.28
2.05	18	23	50	28	5. Are the students provided with additional challenge?	12	14	25	32	18	3.32
1.74	48	43	40	17	6. Do teachers have enhanced confidence in their own abilities in the areas of curriculum and evaluation?	17	11	42	20	10	2.96
1.48	28	62	27	11	7. Has the status of the teaching profession been enhanced?	22	14	36	19	9	2.79

Please write your comments in the following space . . .

What are the benefits/problems of the Provincial Examination Program?

Benefits:

Problems:

What is your evaluation of the Provincial Examination Program?

How would you change the program?

Have your standards for student achievement changed as a result of the Provincial Examination Program?

Appendix E

Teacher Questionnaire

All figures recorded in this appendix are *valid* percentage of respondents, rounded to the nearest whole percent. *Valid* percents do NOT include omits, "I don't know", or "N/A" in the base of calculations.

Provincial Examination Impact

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

N = 947 Note: Figures are valid percent (%)

Beginning in 1983/84, students in British Columbia have been required to write the end-of-course provincial examination for each Grade 12 academic course in which they enrol. Please indicate the change that the Provincial Examination Program has had on these students AND whether the change has been beneficial or detrimental. Please write your comments in the open-ended section at the end of the questionnaire. Your comments are most welcome and will be added to our database.

CHANGE						STUDENTS	EFFECT					
Much Less		No Change		Much Greater			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
1	2	3	4	5	Mean	1. What are the effects on the participation of Grade 12 students in the following extracurricular activities?	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
4	21	66	6	2	2.81	a. School Sports	5	28	61	4	2	2.69
4	21	67	7	1	2.82	b. Drama	6	26	64	3	2	2.70
4	20	67	7	2	2.84	c. Music	6	25	64	4	2	2.71
3	17	71	8	1	2.86	d. School Government	5	19	69	6	2	2.81
7	21	65	6	1	2.75	e. School Clubs	6	25	63	4	1	2.69
2	16	64	12	5	3.02	f. Part-time Employment	6	27	60	6	1	2.68
1	4	56	32	7	3.40	g. Study Groups	2	7	53	32	7	3.36
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
1	1	46	43	10	3.61	2. Students' use of out-of-school tutors for grade 12 subjects is now ...	1	6	54	35	4	3.36
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
1	1	13	53	33	4.17	3. The stress I perceive in my students is now ...	16	40	19	22	3	2.55
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	70	22	6	3.29	4. Student participation in summer school is now ...	2	9	75	12	2	3.04
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
6	35	42	13	4	2.76	5. Student selection of examinable courses is now ...	9	34	45	11	1	2.62
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
6	10	32	42	10	3.41	6. Student selection of non-examinable courses is now ...	10	32	46	11	1	2.62
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
3	12	42	33	11	3.37	7. The interest in the Provincial Scholarship Program is now ...	4	12	45	31	8	3.27
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
2	6	47	37	8	3.42	8. Students' sense of responsibility is now ...	3	10	44	35	9	3.36
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	23	48	26	3.96	9. Student workload in grade 12 courses is now ...	8	29	30	28	4	2.89
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
2	11	57	26	4	3.20	10. The achievement of students in my grade 12 course(s) is now...	4	12	54	23	7	3.17
Much Lower		No Change		Much Higher								
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
4	35	47	13	2	2.72	11. The morale of grade 12 students is now ...	7	34	45	12	2	2.68
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
3	20	67	10	1	2.87	12. The morale of students throughout the school is now...	4	20	65	10	1	2.84
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
3	13	47	32	6	3.24	13. Grade 12 students' motivation to learn is now ...	5	13	46	29	7	3.21

TEACHING

In this section of the questionnaire we would like you to consider the changes in some aspects of your teaching brought about by the reintroduction of the Grade 12 Provincial Examinations.

We have listed a number of aspects of teaching below. Please indicate the extent to which your teaching has been affected by the Grade 12 Examination Program and if, in your opinion, the change or lack of change has had an overall detrimental or beneficial effect on education.

For each aspect of teaching listed we would like you to complete TWO scales:

First, the extent of the CHANGE.
Second, the EFFECT of the change upon students in your classes.

CHANGE						TEACHING	EFFECT					
Much Narrower		No Change		Much Broader	Mean		Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	Mean
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
15	35	30	14	6	2.63	1. The breadth or scope of content of my courses is now...	14	38	33	12	3	2.53
Much Shallower		No Change		Much Deeper								
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
9	29	33	23	6	2.87	2. The depth of coverage of my courses is now...	9	32	38	17	4	2.74
Much Less		No Change		Much More								
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
3	8	49	30	11	3.38	3. The emphasis I place on memorization and rote learning in my teaching is now...	10	24	53	12	2	2.73
5	16	47	25	7	3.14	4. The emphasis I place on problem-solving in my teaching is now...	7	15	48	24	7	3.08
4	18	43	26	9	3.18	5. The emphasis I place on critical thinking in my teaching is now...	6	17	44	24	9	3.13
34	31	28	6	1	2.09	6. The time I spend on discretionary topics such as current affairs and optional topics is now...	30	32	31	6	1	2.16
30	16	48	5	3	2.35	7. The time I spend on locally developed courses is now...	22	19	51	5	2	2.46
2	4	45	30	19	3.59	8. My use of provincial curriculum guides is now...	3	12	57	22	6	3.17
3	6	61	16	13	3.29	9. My use of authorized textbooks is now...	5	14	67	11	4	2.95
1	2	25	49	24	3.91	10a. The time spent on coaching students on how to take tests is ...	6	20	32	36	7	3.17
2	2	46	36	15	3.62	10b. The provision of out-of-class tutorials by the school in examinable subjects is now ...	2	9	53	29	7	3.32

CHANGE						TEACHING	EFFECT					
Much Less 1	2	No Change 3	4	Much More 5	Mean		Very Detrimental 1	2	No Effect 3	4	Very Beneficial 5	Mean
9	16	57	19	4	2.88	11. My use of authorized supplementary course materials is now...	7	18	59	13	3	2.88
20	20	47	9	4	2.57	12. My use of non-authorized supplementary course materials is now...	14	22	50	10	4	2.66
						13. Attention to individual **STUDENTS**						
4	14	60	19	4	3.06	a. The individual attention I give to WEAK students is now...	8	13	57	18	4	2.97
1	6	79	12	2	3.08	b. The individual attention I give to AVERAGE students is now...	3	8	75	12	2	3.02
3	10	63	20	6	3.14	c. The individual attention I give to STRONG students is now...	5	10	61	17	6	3.09
8	16	59	14	3	2.88	14. My use of small group instruction is now...	7	18	60	14	3	2.88
1	6	64	18	12	3.34	15. My use of large group instruction is now...	4	15	69	10	2	2.90
1	3	56	31	10	3.45	16. The amount of homework I assign students is now...	2	10	63	21	3	3.12
16	30	40	11	3	2.56	17. The number of written assignments involving creative or research-based activities I assign students is now...	15	31	41	11	3	2.56
2	5	57	29	7	3.34	18. The number of worksheet-type activities I assign students is now..	3	16	63	16	2	3.00
13	23	49	14	3	2.71	19. The number of cooperative projects I assign students is now...	8	24	53	13	3	2.78
2	3	38	35	23	3.75	20. The use of multiple-choice items in my classroom tests is now...	7	22	50	16	5	2.90
7	26	50	12	4	2.81	21. The use of open-ended items in my classroom tests is now...	6	24	53	13	4	2.87
1	4	62	25	8	3.34	22. The number of tests I give during my courses is now...	2	13	69	14	3	3.03
2	6	51	31	10	3.41	23. The weight I assign to paper and pencil tests, rather than projects, assignments, labs, etc., in determining final grades is now...	6	26	56	10	2	2.77
1	2	29	47	21	3.85	24. The time I spend on all examination related activities is now...	11	31	36	19	3	2.73
						25. **FIELD TRIPS** Do your courses involve field trips? Yes 36 No 64						
Much Less 1	2	No Change 3	4	Much More 5			1	2	3	4	5	
22	21	52	4	1	2.41	If yes, the number of field trips my classes take is now...	25	22	45	5	3	2.39
						26. **LABS** Do your courses involve laboratory work by students? Yes, science labs 25 No 62 Yes, language labs 1 Yes, other formats 12						
Much Less 1	2	No Change 3	4	Much More 5			1	2	3	4	5	
14	29	46	8	3	2.58	If yes, the number of labs in my classes is now...	15	27	44	9	5	2.62
22	31	43	3	2	2.31	27. The time available for labs is now...	21	33	41	4	1	2.32

UTILIZATION

In this section of the questionnaire we would like you to consider the uses made of the Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program by you, your students, your colleagues, parents, school administrators, and others:

YOUR USE OF GRADE 12 EXAMINATIONS

The Ministry of Education produces a number of reports based on student examination results. Exam results are reported as individual student marks, school summaries, and provincial summaries. The Ministry also produces exam specifications for all examinable subjects and copies of previously used exams.

Please indicate the extent to which you use results from the Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program by responding to the items below using the scale:

N/A	This use is Not Applicable to my teaching assignment
1 - NEVER	This is a use I have never made of the examinations.
2 - SELDOM	This is a use I make infrequently, and occasionally not at all, within a course.
3 - SOME	This is a use I make, but only at limited times during my course.
4 - OFTEN	This is a use I make frequently throughout the course.

FREQUENCY							EFFECT					
N/A N/A	Never 1	Seldom 2	Some 3	Often 4	Mean	USE OF EXAMINATION RESULTS - STUDENT SCORES, SCHOOL AVERAGES	Very Detrimental 1	2	No Effect 3	4	Very Beneficial 5	Mean
24	5	11	32	52	3.31	1. I review the results of the Provincial Examinations for the students I teach ...	2	5	38	38	17	3.64
39	14	15	28	43	3.00	2. I compare the Provincial Examination results across the classes I teach...	3	4	56	24	13	3.39
24	3	6	26	66	3.55	3. I compare the marks I award students to their Provincial Examination marks...	2	7	42	31	18	3.57
						4. I compare the Provincial Examination marks of my students with the marks of others:						
37	11	12	29	48	3.13	A. IN MY SCHOOL.	3	5	55	25	12	3.38
34	10	12	29	49	3.16	B. IN MY DISTRICT.	4	6	55	25	11	3.35
25	7	12	31	51	3.26	C. IN THE PROVINCE.	3	6	49	28	14	3.44
N/A N/A	Never 1	Seldom 2	Some 3	Often 4		USE OF EXAMINATION MATERIALS - OLD EXAMINATIONS, EXAM SPECIFICATIONS	1	2	3	4	5	
24	5	11	36	48	3.27	5. I use the Provincial Examination Program to define the content of my course...	10	24	26	29	11	3.06
24	3	11	37	49	3.31	6. In discussions with students I refer to the Ministry of Education's EXAM SPECIFICATIONS...	5	13	33	33	16	3.41

FREQUENCY						USE OF EXAMINATION MATERIALS - OLD EXAMINATIONS, EXAM SPECIFICATIONS	EFFECT					
N/A	Never	Seldom	Some	Often			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
N/A	1	2	3	4	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
25	7	20	34	39	3.04	7. In class I explicitly describe the relationship of the course content to the examination by using the EXAM SPECIFICATIONS...	4	12	38	35	12	3.39
24	10	19	41	30	2.91	8. I use the EXAM SPECIFICATIONS for the development of my own classroom tests...	3	12	37	37	11	3.41
49	20	22	35	23	2.61	9. The EXAM SPECIFICATIONS are used for the development of school-wide tests...	3	7	55	26	9	3.31
27	35	21	26	18	2.27	10. I administer old Provincial Examinations to students as a complete two-hour examination ...	3	5	46	32	15	3.50
24	2	8	32	58	3.46	11. I administer selected questions from old Provincial Examinations at relevant points during my course ...	1	4	19	51	26	3.96
26	13	24	40	23	2.72	12. How often do results of old Provincial Examinations or items count toward the student grades in your course?	2	6	45	36	11	3.48
27	9	20	48	23	2.84	13. How often do you use these results to guide your instruction?	3	8	38	40	11	3.48

USE OF THE EXAMINATION RESULTS BY OTHERS

The Provincial Examination Program could be used in a number of ways by other people in the educational system.

We are interested in your perception of the uses being made of the Provincial Examination Program by these other people. Please indicate the extent to which examination results are used as described in the statements below, and also indicate the effect of this use upon the educational system.

FREQUENCY						USE OF THE EXAMINATION RESULTS BY OTHERS	EFFECT					
Don't Know	Never	Seldom	Some	Often			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
?	1	2	3	4	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
37	10	16	50	24	2.88	1. SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS use the examination results in the evaluation of TEACHERS.	31	29	26	13	2	2.26
55	13	14	49	25	2.85	2. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS use the examination results in the evaluation of TEACHERS.	34	28	33	5	1	2.11
61	20	19	40	21	2.62	3. The SCHOOL BOARD uses the examination results in the evaluation of TEACHERS.	35	22	39	4	1	2.14
45	4	11	49	36	3.18	4. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS use the examination results in the evaluation of SCHOOLS.	33	30	23	14	1	2.20
53	7	11	47	36	3.11	5. The SCHOOL BOARD uses the examination results in the evaluation of SCHOOLS.	34	25	30	10	1	2.21

FREQUENCY						USE OF THE EXAMINATION RESULTS BY OTHERS	EFFECT					
Don't Know	Never	Seldom	Some	Often			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
?	1	2	3	4	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
41	4	14	54	28	3.05	6. PARENTS use the examination results (their knowledge of them) in the evaluation of SCHOOLS.	23	33	28	14	3	2.41
51	13	27	45	15	2.62	7. PARENTS use the examination results in deciding which high school to enroll their child.	18	26	41	13	2	2.56
35	1	4	26	70	3.64	8. UNIVERSITIES use the examination results to select students for admission.	9	25	29	30	8	3.02
36	2	7	32	59	3.48	9. COLLEGES use the examination results to select students for admission.	9	24	32	27	7	2.99
52	15	33	38	14	2.51	10. EMPLOYERS use the examination results to select students for jobs.	8	15	55	18	3	2.93
45	13	22	45	20	2.74	11. SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS use the examination results in determining teaching assignments for teachers.	18	27	31	21	4	2.67
50	7	12	38	43	3.17	12. The MINISTRY of EDUCATION uses the examination program to influence the content and nature of the Grade 12 curriculum.	22	26	30	20	4	2.57
48	2	4	38	56	3.48	13. The MINISTRY of EDUCATION uses the examination results to compare the different school districts.	31	29	24	13	2	2.25
70	19	18	35	27	2.71	14. The Provincial Examination Program influences the allocation of educational resources.	31	20	41	7	1	2.27
30	19	14	34	34	2.84	15. Provincial Examination results are used to determine local awards and scholarships.	10	13	40	28	10	3.14

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. How many grade 12 students are enrolled in your school?

(8) 0 to 50 (42) 51 to 200 (26) 201 to 350 (13) 351 to 500 (7) 501 to 1000 (4) over 1000

2. Which Provincial examinable Grade 12 subjects do you teach? (Fill in all that apply)

(20) None	(13) Algebra	(9) Biology	(8) Chemistry	(7) Communications
(20) English	(7) English Lit.	(6) French	(7) Geography	(1) Geology
(1) German	(8) History	(<1) Latin	(7) Physics	(<1) Spanish

3. What is your school? (33) Semestered (67) Non-semestered

4. How many years have you been a Teacher in this school? (17) 0 to 3 (11) 4 to 5 (72) 6 or over

5. How many years have you been a Teacher in your career? (6) 0 to 6 (11) 7 to 10 (83) 11 or over

6. Would you describe your school as being ... (34) Urban (36) Suburban (30) Rural

7. Have you served on a Provincial Examination Committee? (35) Yes (65) No
(e.g., Board of Examiners, Marking, Exam construction or Review)

SCHOOL CLIMATE

The Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program could affect some of the general characteristics of a school that are difficult to pinpoint, but nevertheless are important to the "educational climate" in which the students and staff function.

Please indicate the extent of the change on each of the factors listed below and whether this change has had a beneficial or detrimental effect on the climate of your school.

CHANGE						SCHOOL CLIMATE	EFFECT					
Much Worse		No Change		Much Better			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
1	2	3	4	5	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
2	18	53	23	4	3.08	1. The overall tone of the school is now ...	4	18	52	22	5	3.05
1	8	74	15	3	3.11	2. The relationship between me and my students is now...	2	6	72	15	5	3.14
Much Lower		No Change		Much Higher								
11	40	37	10	1	2.51	3. The morale of teachers is now ...	17	35	36	10	2	2.46
2	9	36	40	13	3.54	4. The "status" of examinable subjects is now ...	7	24	39	25	5	2.96
10	35	44	9	3	2.59	5. The "status" of non-examinable subjects is now ...	17	32	45	5	1	2.41
Much Less		No Change		Much Greater								
4	5	51	28	13	3.41	6. Use of school counselling services for personal problems is now ...	9	18	54	17	3	2.86
3	6	51	31	9	3.39	7. Use of school counselling services for vocational information is now ...	5	7	54	27	8	3.26
19	36	35	6	3	2.38	8. My sense of control over what I teach is now...	18	34	37	7	4	2.44
7	23	41	25	3	2.95	9. I perceive that public confidence in the schools is now ...	13	19	41	22	4	2.85
8	18	53	17	5	2.93	10. My workload in teaching Grade 12 courses is now...	10	27	56	6	2	2.63
16	26	34	18	7	2.74	11. The stress I experience as a teacher is now...	23	36	36	4	1	2.23
6	10	78	5	2	2.86	12. My interaction with teachers of the lower grades is now...	7	11	77	4	2	2.84
3	10	74	11	2	2.98	13. My interaction with other Grade 12 subjects is now...	4	10	73	11	2	2.96
1	3	36	51	8	3.63	14. The test-wiseness of students entering Grade 12 is now ...	2	12	42	38	6	3.34

GENERAL EFFECTS

Listed below are some possible effects of the Provincial Examination Program. Please indicate the extent to which these effects exist and the effect upon the education process.

CHANGE Much Less 1	2	No Change 3	4	Much Greater 5	Mean	GENERAL EFFECTS	EFFECT Very Detrimental 1	2	No Effect 3	4	Very Beneficial 5	Mean
5	16	65	11	4	2.93	1. As a result of the Grade 12 Examination Program, my class size is now ...	9	20	64	6	1	2.71
1	4	61	24	10	3.39	2. As a result of the Grade 12 Examination Program, school timetabling problems are now ...	10	27	62	2	0	2.57
1	3	54	35	7	3.44	3. The attention given in lower grades to curricular material linked to grade 12 examinable subjects is now...	4	16	55	22	3	3.04
28	42	23	6	1	2.10	4. Adaptation of curriculum to meet individual student's interests is now ...	29	40	25	5	1	2.09
3	4	43	30	21	3.62	5. The use of school-wide examinations in grade 12 is now ...	6	15	52	21	6	3.05
1	1	49	34	16	3.63	6. The use of examinations in lower grades is now...	4	15	54	22	5	3.08
3	2	75	13	7	3.20	7. The use of district-wide examinations is now ...	5	7	79	8	1	2.91
6	8	62	21	4	3.09	8. In-service opportunities related to grade 12 courses are now...	7	14	56	20	3	2.99

INTENTIONS OF THE PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS PROGRAM

The Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program was introduced in the 1983/84 school year. Please indicate the extent to which you perceive its stated intentions have been achieved and the effect upon the B.C. educational system.

CHANGE Mean	I Don't Know ?	Not at All 1	To Some Extent 2	Yes Definitely 3	INTENTIONS	EFFECT Very Detrimental 1	2	No Effect 3	4	Very Beneficial 5	Mean
1.89	45	30	52	19	1. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying to university?	9	7	31	41	12	3.39
1.84	47	32	52	16	2. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying to colleges?	9	9	39	38	11	3.34
1.43	62	65	26	8	3. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying for employment?	8	5	67	16	5	3.06
2.49	27	4	44	53	4. Is the provincial curriculum being more closely followed within the schools of British Columbia?	4	19	22	40	15	3.43
1.82	20	34	50	16	5. Are the students provided with additional challenge?	10	20	26	34	10	3.14
1.64	33	47	43	11	6. Do teachers have enhanced confidence in their own abilities in the areas of curriculum and evaluation?	12	15	37	30	6	3.04
1.28	33	76	20	4	7. Has the status of the teaching profession been enhanced?	24	18	37	17	5	2.60

Please write your comments in the following space . . .

What are the benefits/problems of the Provincial Examination Program?

Benefits:

Problems:

What is your evaluation of the Provincial Examination Program?

How would you change the program?

Have your standards for your students' achievement changed as a result of the Provincial Examination Program?

Appendix F

Principal Questionnaire

All figures recorded in this appendix are *valid* percentage of respondents, rounded to the nearest whole percent. *Valid* percents do NOT include omits, "I don't know", or "N/A" in the base of calculations.

Provincial Examination Impact

PRINCIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE

N=160 Note: Figures are valid percent (%)

Beginning in 1983/84, students in British Columbia have been required to write the end-of-course provincial examination for each Grade 12 academic course in which they enrol. Please indicate the change that the Provincial Examination Program has had on these students AND whether the change has been beneficial or detrimental. Please write your comments in the open-ended section at the end of the questionnaire. Your comments are most welcome and will be added to our database.

CHANGE						STUDENTS	EFFECT					
Much Less		No Change		Much Greater		1. What are the effects on the participation of Grade 12 students in the following extracurricular activities?	Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
1	2	3	4	5	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
1	21	71	6	1	2.86	a. School Sports	1	28	65	5	2	2.79
1	14	81	4	0	2.87	b. Drama	1	21	74	3	1	2.82
4	17	75	3	0	2.78	c. Music	4	25	67	3	1	2.72
3	10	85	1	1	2.89	d. School Government	5	11	80	3	1	2.85
4	11	82	4	0	2.86	e. School Clubs	1	16	78	3	2	2.90
2	14	75	7	3	2.94	f. Part-time Employment	3	16	73	8	0	2.86
0	3	49	41	8	3.53	g. Study Groups	0	5	47	44	5	3.49
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	0	34	58	8	3.74	2. Students' use of out-of-school tutors for grade 12 subjects is now ...	0	6	40	48	6	3.52
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	3	5	62	30	4.20	3. The stress teachers perceive in their students is now ...	4	63	11	17	4	2.54
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	0	75	19	6	3.30	4. Student participation in summer school is now ...	1	5	80	14	0	3.07
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
2	41	41	16	1	2.72	5. Student selection of examinable courses is now ...	4	44	46	6	0	2.54
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
1	11	36	45	7	3.47	6. Student selection of non-examinable courses is now ...	4	33	46	18	0	2.77
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
2	11	30	46	11	3.52	7. The interest in the Provincial Scholarship Program is now ...	5	14	34	39	9	3.33
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
2	5	49	41	3	3.39	8. Students' sense of responsibility is now ...	2	4	54	35	5	3.37
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
1	2	14	64	19	3.98	9. Student workload in grade 12 courses is now ...	2	32	27	36	3	3.05
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	7	52	35	6	3.39	10. The achievement of students in their grade 12 course(s) is now...	1	6	53	34	6	3.38
Much Lower		No Change		Much Higher								
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
1	33	52	14	1	2.82	11. The morale of grade 12 students is now ...	5	27	55	12	1	2.77
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	19	64	16	1	3.00	12. The morale of students throughout the schools is now...	0	18	63	16	3	3.03
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
1	8	43	44	5	3.45	13. Grade 12 students' motivation to learn is now ...	1	11	43	41	5	3.38

TEACHING

In this section of the questionnaire we would like you to consider the changes in some aspects of teaching brought about by the reintroduction of the Grade 12 Provincial Examinations.

We have listed a number of aspects of teaching below. Please indicate the extent to which you feel teaching has been affected by the Grade 12 Examination Program and if, in your opinion, the change or lack of change has had an overall detrimental or beneficial effect on education.

For each aspect of teaching listed we would like you to complete TWO scales:

First, the extent of the CHANGE.
Second, the EFFECT of the change upon students in your school.

CHANGE						TEACHING	EFFECT					
Much Narrower		No Change		Much Broader			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
1	2	3	4	5	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
15	49	6	26	3	2.52	1. The breadth or scope of content of courses is now...	9	57	8	22	5	2.59
Much Shallower		No Change		Much Deeper								
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
5	38	18	35	4	2.95	2. The depth of coverage of courses is now...	5	48	18	27	3	2.73
Much Less		No Change		Much More								
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
1	11	21	55	13	3.67	3. The emphasis placed on memorization and rote learning in teaching is now...	16	47	24	10	3	2.39
4	35	20	39	3	3.03	4. The emphasis placed on problem-solving in teaching is now...	8	30	19	35	8	3.04
6	28	23	39	4	3.08	5. The emphasis placed on critical thinking in teaching is now...	11	26	21	36	6	3.01
31	55	9	5	0	1.88	6. The time spent on discretionary topics such as current affairs and optional topics is now...	33	43	14	8	2	2.03
11	35	45	7	2	2.54	7. The time spent on locally developed courses is now...	8	29	53	8	2	2.67
0	2	25	59	14	3.84	8. The use of provincial curriculum guides is now...	0	13	46	33	8	3.37
0	12	28	53	8	3.57	9. The use of authorized textbooks is now...	3	19	45	30	4	3.14
1	0	10	66	23	4.10	10a. The time teachers spend on coaching students on how to take tests is ...	7	19	12	58	5	3.36
1	0	27	54	18	3.87	10b. The provision of out-of-class tutorials by my school in examinable subjects is now ...	2	8	27	57	7	3.58

CHANGE						TEACHING	EFFECT					
Much Less		No Change		Much More	Mean		Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	Mean
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
2	27	39	28	3	3.04	11. The use of authorized supplementary course materials is now...	1	28	35	33	3	3.09
14	44	33	9	0	2.35	12. The use of non-authorized supplementary course materials is now...	10	40	35	13	2	2.57
						13. Attention to individual **STUDENTS**						
3	21	44	29	3	3.06	a. The individual attention given to WEAK students is now...	6	25	38	29	3	2.97
1	6	73	17	3	3.14	b. The individual attention given to AVERAGE students is now...	4	11	64	18	3	3.04
0	8	33	47	13	3.65	c. The individual attention given to STRONG students is now...	1	15	29	43	12	3.49
1	21	55	22	1	3.01	14. The use of small group instruction is now...	0	27	50	20	3	2.99
1	5	68	24	3	3.22	15. The use of large group instruction is now...	1	22	66	10	1	2.86
0	0	24	63	13	3.90	16. The amount of homework assigned to students is now...	0	18	34	44	4	3.34
11	30	31	26	2	2.77	17. The number of written assignments involving creative or research-based activities assigned to students complete is now...	15	27	30	25	3	2.73
0	10	45	41	5	3.40	18. The number of worksheet-type activities assigned to students is now...	4	28	51	15	3	2.85
5	26	43	26	1	2.93	19. The number of cooperative projects assigned to students is now...	6	27	38	27	2	2.91
0	0	23	58	19	3.95	20. The use of multiple-choice items in classroom tests is now...	5	41	41	12	0	2.60
6	36	37	21	1	2.74	21. The use of open-ended items in classroom tests is now...	7	36	40	16	1	2.67
0	2	32	62	5	3.69	22. The number of tests given during courses is now...	0	23	46	30	1	3.09
3	7	43	42	6	3.41	23. The weight assigned to paper and pencil tests, rather than projects, assignments, labs, etc., in determining your teachers' final grades is now...	9	40	40	11	1	2.54
0	0	5	71	25	4.20	24. The time spent on all examination related activities is now...	9	47	13	28	3	2.67
Much Less		No Change		Much More								
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
21	38	37	4	1	2.25	25. The number of field trips classes take is now...	26	36	34	5	1	2.19
8	35	48	7	1	2.59	26. The number of labs in classes is now...	9	30	49	9	3	2.65
11	38	47	3	1	2.45	27. The time available for labs is now...	13	35	47	4	1	2.46

UTILIZATION

In this section of the questionnaire we would like you to consider possible uses made of the Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program by you, your teachers, your students, parents, other school administrators, and others:

YOUR USE OF GRADE 12 EXAMINATIONS

The Ministry of Education produces a number of reports based on student examination results. Exam results are reported as individual student marks, school summaries, and provincial summaries. The Ministry also produces exam specifications for all examinable subjects and copies of previously used exams.

Please indicate the **FREQUENCY** or extent to which you use results from the Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program by responding to the items below using the scale:

N/A	This use is Not Applicable to me.
1 - NEVER	This is a use I have never made of the examinations.
2 - SELDOM	This is a use I make infrequently, and occasionally not at all.
3 - SOME	This is a use I make, but only at limited times.
4 - OFTEN	This is a use I make frequently.

In addition, please indicate the **EFFECT** that the Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program has had on these items.

FREQUENCY						USE OF EXAMINATION RESULTS - STUDENT SCORES, SCHOOL AVERAGES	EFFECT					
N/A	Never	Seldom	Some	Often			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
N/A	1	2	3	4	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
0	0	3	26	72	3.69	1. I review the results of the Provincial Examinations for the students in my school...	0	3	14	56	27	4.07
13	1	18	26	55	3.36	2. I compare the Provincial Examination results across the classes in my school...	0	4	27	49	19	3.83
18	4	10	37	50	3.32	3. I compare the Provincial Examination results across the schools in my district...	3	3	33	41	20	3.72
0	0	3	35	63	3.60	4. I compare the marks awarded students by my teachers to the students' Provincial Examination marks...	0	5	20	54	21	3.91
14	18	26	30	26	2.65	5. I compare the Provincial Exam marks of students of teachers in my school with the marks of students of other teachers in my school...	3	4	52	28	13	3.43
20	6	9	37	48	3.26	6. I compare the Provincial Examination marks of students in my school with the marks of other schools in my district...	1	3	40	39	18	3.70
0	7	8	35	50	3.28	7. I compare the Provincial Examination marks of students in my school with the marks of students in other districts...	2	3	37	44	14	3.65
N/A	Never	Seldom	Some	Often		USE OF EXAMINATION MATERIALS - OLD EXAMINATIONS, EXAM SPECIFICATIONS						
N/A	1	2	3	4			1	2	3	4	5	
0	1	3	41	56	3.52	8. My teachers use the Provincial Examination Program to define the content of their courses...	3	26	18	39	15	3.37
0	1	5	40	54	3.47	9. My teachers refer to the Ministry of Education's EXAM SPECIFICATIONS in discussions with students ...	1	10	13	55	21	3.86

FREQUENCY N/A	Never 1	Seldom 2	Some 3	Often 4	Mean	USE OF EXAMINATION MATERIALS - OLD EXAMINATIONS, EXAM SPECIFICATIONS	EFFECT Very Detrimental 1	2	No Effect 3	4	Very Beneficial 5	Mean
0	1	13	49	39	3.23	10. My teachers explicitly describe the relationship of the course content to the examination by using the EXAM SPECIFICATIONS...	0	12	23	48	18	3.71
0	0	9	62	29	3.20	11. My teachers use the EXAM SPECIFICATIONS for the development of their own classroom tests...	0	5	22	58	15	3.83
18	8	32	44	17	2.70	12. The EXAM SPECIFICATIONS are used by my teachers for the development of school-wide tests ...	2	4	40	44	10	3.56
0	19	19	39	23	2.66	13. My teachers administer old Provincial Examinations to students as a complete two-hour examination ...	1	2	34	48	14	3.71
0	1	0	34	65	3.62	14. My teachers administer selected questions from old Provincial Examinations at relevant points during their courses ...	1	2	8	56	33	4.17
0	14	37	45	4	2.39	15. How often should results of old Provincial Examinations or items count toward the student grades in the course?	3	15	48	31	3	3.16
0	1	16	60	23	3.05	16. How often are these results used to guide instruction?	4	12	20	57	7	3.50

USE OF THE EXAMINATION RESULTS BY OTHERS

The Provincial Examination Program could be used in a number of ways by other people in the educational system.

We are interested in your perception of the uses being made of the Provincial Examination Program by these other people. Please indicate the extent to which examination results are used as described in the statements below, and also indicate the effect of this use upon the educational system.

FREQUENCY I Don't Know ?	Never 1	Seldom 2	Some 3	Often 4	Mean	USE OF THE EXAMINATION RESULTS BY OTHERS	EFFECT Very Detrimental 1	2	No Effect 3	4	Very Beneficial 5	Mean
0	51	28	20	1	1.72	1. I use the examination results in the evaluation of my TEACHERS.	19	3	58	19	1	2.81
23	52	29	18	1	1.67	2. **DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS** use the examination results in the evaluation of TEACHERS.	23	14	59	4	0	2.44
27	62	17	19	2	1.62	3. **The SCHOOL BOARD** uses the examination results in the evaluation of TEACHERS.	32	10	55	2	0	2.28
22	17	23	51	9	2.52	4. **DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS**use the examination results in the evaluation of SCHOOLS.	23	27	38	13	0	2.41
31	16	33	40	11	2.45	5. **The SCHOOL BOARD** uses the examination results in the evaluation of SCHOOLS.	27	25	42	6	0	2.27

FREQUENCY						USE OF THE EXAMINATION RESULTS BY OTHERS	EFFECT					
I Don't Know	Never	Seldom	Some	Often			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
?	1	2	3	4	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
23	11	24	57	9	2.64	6. PARENTS use their knowledge of the examination results in the evaluation of my SCHOOL.	13	21	38	27	1	2.81
34	27	24	46	4	2.27	7. PARENTS use the examination results in deciding which high school to enroll their child.	14	16	55	15	0	2.71
12	2	1	23	75	3.70	8. UNIVERSITIES use the examination results to select students for admission.	10	33	15	28	13	3.01
11	3	13	32	53	3.35	9. COLLEGES use the examination results to select students for admission.	10	26	26	27	11	3.03
30	24	43	31	3	2.12	10. EMPLOYERS use the examination results to select students for jobs.	11	12	63	13	1	2.81
0	22	36	34	9	2.30	11. I use the examination results in determining teaching assignments for teachers.	4	10	38	41	7	3.37
40	5	17	43	35	3.08	12. The MINISTRY of EDUCATION uses the examination program to influence the content and nature of the Grade 12 curriculum.	8	26	29	32	5	3.00
51	4	12	41	44	3.24	13. The MINISTRY of EDUCATION uses the examination results to compare the different school districts.	23	27	41	6	3	2.39
64	24	35	36	5	2.22	14. The Provincial Examination Program influences the allocation of educational resources.	18	21	52	8	2	2.57
7	38	16	24	22	2.29	15. Provincial Examination results are used to determine local awards and scholarships in my school.	5	9	50	28	9	3.26

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. How many grade 12 students are enrolled in your school?

14	0 to 50	46	51 to 200	26	201 to 350	10	351 to 500	4	501 to 1000	1	over 1000

2. How many Grade 12 Provincial Exams were written in your school last year?

12	0 to 50	26	51 to 200	17	201 to 350	8	351 to 500	28	501 to 1000	10	over 1000

3. How many Grade 12 course credits were given that **did not** have have a Provincial Exam component?

23	0 to 50	16	51 to 200	11	201 to 350	17	351 to 500	17	501 to 1000	17	over 1000

4. How many years have you been a Principal in this school?	58	0 to 3	22	4 to 5	21	6 or over
5. How many years have you been a Principal in your career?	39	0 to 6	19	7 to 10	41	11 or over
6. Would you describe your school as being ...	26	Urban	30	Suburban	45	Rural
7. Have you served on a Provincial Examination Committee? **(e.g., Board of Examiners, Marking, Exam construction or Review)**			22	Yes	78	No

SCHOOL CLIMATE

The Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program could affect some of the general characteristics of schools that are difficult to pinpoint, but nevertheless are important to the "educational climate" in which the students and staff function.

Please indicate the extent of the change on each of the factors listed below and whether this change has had a beneficial or detrimental effect on the climate of your school.

CHANGE						SCHOOL CLIMATE	EFFECT					
Much Worse		No Change		Much Better			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
1	2	3	4	5	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
0	10	49	36	6	3.36	1. The overall tone of my school following the introduction of the Grade 12 exams is now ...	0	11	47	35	7	3.38
0	3	71	21	4	3.26	2. The relationship between teachers and students is now...	0	4	68	23	5	3.30
Much Lower		No Change		Much Higher								
2	42	42	11	3	2.71	3. The morale of teachers is now ...	7	38	42	8	5	2.66
0	1	24	59	15	3.89	4. The "status" of examinable subjects is now ...	1	19	41	32	7	3.23
7	32	50	11	1	2.67	5. The "status" of non-examinable subjects is now ...	7	33	54	6	0	2.60
Much Less		No Change		Much Greater								
1	6	44	34	15	3.58	6. Use of school counselling services for personal problems is now ...	8	23	51	15	3	2.81
1	5	29	54	11	3.68	7. Use of school counselling services for vocational information is now ...	2	5	35	50	8	3.58
7	70	15	7	2	2.29	8. Teachers' sense of control over what they teach is now...	10	51	26	11	1	2.43
0	2	45	45	9	3.60	9. I perceive that public confidence in my school is now ...	1	2	44	42	12	3.61
6	27	27	39	2	3.04	10. Teachers' workload in teaching Grade 12 courses is now...	9	47	31	13	1	2.51
7	33	20	38	3	2.96	11. The stress I perceive in teachers is now...	20	52	22	5	1	2.16
4	13	63	17	3	3.01	12. Teachers' interaction with teachers of the lower grades is now...	4	17	61	15	4	2.99
1	13	63	23	1	3.09	13. Teachers' interaction with other Grade 12 subjects is now ...	2	15	59	22	2	3.07
0	1	16	69	14	3.95	14. The test-wiseness of students entering Grade 12 is now ...	0	6	20	64	10	3.78

GENERAL EFFECTS

Listed below are some possible effects of the Provincial Examination Program. Please indicate the extent to which these effects exist and the effect upon the education process.

CHANGE						GENERAL EFFECTS	EFFECT					
Much Less		No Change		Much Greater	Mean		Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	Mean
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	15	80	4	1	2.92	1. As a result of the Grade 12 Examination Program, class sizes are now ...	2	13	77	8	1	2.92
0	2	57	33	8	3.47	2. As a result of the Grade 12 Examination Program, school timetabling problems are now ...	10	28	59	2	0	2.53
0	1	36	59	5	3.68	3. The attention given in lower grades to curricular material linked to grade 12 examinable subjects is now...	1	18	32	45	3	3.31
14	51	23	12	0	2.33	4. Adaptation of curriculum to meet individual student's interests is now ...	16	55	18	12	0	2.26
0	0	39	51	10	3.71	5. The use of school-wide examinations in grade 12 is now ...	0	5	44	48	3	3.50
0	3	44	41	12	3.62	6. The use of examinations in lower grades is now...	0	13	48	33	6	3.32
1	1	91	4	1	3.03	7. The use of district-wide examinations in grade 12 is now ...	0	0	93	6	1	3.07
1	3	47	45	3	3.47	8. In-service opportunities related to grade 12 courses are now...	1	5	44	43	6	3.48

INTENTIONS OF THE PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS PROGRAM

The Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program was introduced in the 1983/84 school year. Please indicate the extent to which you perceive its stated intentions have been achieved and the effect upon the B.C. educational system.

CHANGE					INTENTIONS	EFFECT					
	I Don't Know	Not at All	To Some Extent	Yes Definitely		Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
Mean	?	1	2	3		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
1.98	33	29	44	27	1. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying to university?	4	10	27	39	19	3.58
1.88	36	35	42	23	2. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying to colleges?	4	8	36	36	17	3.55
1.29	36	73	26	2	3. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying for employment?	3	13	64	17	3	3.02
2.56	7	2	40	58	4. Is the provincial curriculum being more closely followed within the schools of British Columbia?	1	17	15	49	18	3.65
2.12	8	16	57	27	5. Are the students provided with additional challenge?	6	8	13	55	17	3.69
1.84	16	28	61	11	6. Do teachers have enhanced confidence in their own abilities in the areas of curriculum and evaluation?	3	13	24	48	13	3.55
1.52	13	54	37	6	7. Has the status of the teaching profession been enhanced?	8	16	29	39	8	3.21

Please write your comments in the following space . . .

What are the benefits/problems of the Provincial Examination Program?

Benefits:

Problems:

What is your evaluation of the Provincial Examination Program?

How would you change the program?

Have your standards for students' achievement changed as a result of the Provincial Examination Program?

Appendix G

Counsellor Questionnaire

All figures recorded in this appendix are *valid* percentage of respondents, rounded to the nearest whole percent. *Valid* percents do NOT include omits, "I don't know", or "N/A" in the base of calculations.

Provincial Examination Impact

COUNSELLOR QUESTIONNAIRE

N= 137 Note: Figures in valid percent (%)

Beginning in 1983/84, students in British Columbia have been required to write the end-of-course provincial examination for each Grade 12 academic course in which they enrol. Please indicate the change that the Provincial Examination Program has had on these students AND whether the change has been beneficial or detrimental. Please write your comments in the open-ended section at the end of the questionnaire. Your comments are most welcome and will be added to our database.

CHANGE						STUDENTS	EFFECT					
Much Less		No Change		Much Greater			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
1	2	3	4	5	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
						1. What are the effects on the participation of Grade 12 students in the following extracurricular activities?						
10	18	59	10	3	2.78	a. School Sports	11	30	55	4	2	2.56
5	16	72	4	3	2.85	b. Drama	8	21	68	2	2	2.69
6	20	67	3	4	2.79	c. Music	8	25	65	1	1	2.61
5	10	79	5	1	2.88	d. School Government	5	22	70	2	2	2.75
6	13	73	5	3	2.85	e. School Clubs	11	18	69	1	2	2.64
3	17	64	11	6	3.00	f. Part-time Employment	9	27	59	4	1	2.60
2	3	54	26	14	3.47	g. Study Groups	1	7	57	27	9	3.37
0	0	39	50	11	3.71	2. Students' use of out-of-school tutors for grade 12 subjects is now ...	2	8	50	37	3	3.30
0	0	3	53	44	4.40	3. The stress teachers perceive in their students is now ...	27	52	7	15	0	2.11
1	1	63	30	5	3.38	4. Student participation in summer school is now ...	3	11	70	14	3	3.03
8	31	37	18	6	2.85	5. Student selection of examinable courses is now ...	10	37	40	9	4	2.59
4	15	30	38	14	3.44	6. Student selection of non-examinable courses is now ...	14	33	43	10	1	2.51
2	6	39	41	12	3.53	7. The interest in the Provincial Scholarship Program is now ...	2	10	46	33	10	3.40
4	2	57	34	3	3.31	8. Students' sense of responsibility is now ...	4	4	55	32	5	3.31
0	3	24	52	21	3.91	9. Student workload in grade 12 courses is now ...	6	40	26	23	5	2.81
2	11	59	24	5	3.20	10. The achievement of students in their grade 12 course(s) is now...	6	14	57	20	3	3.02
Much Lower		No Change		Much Higher								
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
8	39	42	9	3	2.61	11. The morale of grade 12 students is now ...	12	38	39	8	4	2.54
5	21	66	5	2	2.79	12. The morale of students throughout the schools is now...	6	23	65	5	2	2.73
5	8	54	29	5	3.20	13. Grade 12 students' motivation to learn is now ...	6	12	53	25	4	3.09

TEACHING

In this section of the questionnaire we would like you to consider the changes in some aspects of teaching brought about by the reintroduction of the Grade 12 Provincial Examinations.

We have listed a number of aspects of teaching below. Please indicate the extent to which you feel teaching has been affected by the Grade 12 Examination Program and if, in your opinion, the change or lack of change has had an overall detrimental or beneficial effect on education.

For each aspect of teaching listed we would like you to complete TWO scales:

First, the extent of the CHANGE.
Second, the EFFECT of the change upon students in your school.

CHANGE						TEACHING	EFFECT					
Much Narrower		No Change		Much Broader	Mean		Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	Mean
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
26	38	12	17	8	2.42	1. The breadth or scope of content of courses is now...	27	45	13	12	3	2.18
Much Shallower		No Change		Much Deeper								
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
20	38	19	18	6	2.53	2. The depth of coverage of courses is now...	19	39	24	15	3	2.45
Much Less		No Change		Much More								
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
4	7	21	46	23	3.77	3. The emphasis placed on memorization and rote learning in teaching is now...	18	48	24	4	6	2.32
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
10	35	35	14	6	2.70	4. The emphasis placed on problem-solving in teaching is now...	16	35	29	13	7	2.60
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
13	41	24	16	7	2.63	5. The emphasis placed on critical thinking in teaching is now...	17	40	23	13	7	2.53
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
42	46	9	3	1	1.75	6. The time spent on discretio[illegible] such as current affairs and optional topics is now...	40	47	9	3	1	1.77
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
24	37	30	7	3	2.27	7. The time spent on locally developed courses is now...	22	37	30	7	4	2.36
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
6	1	31	43	19	3.68	8. The use of provincial curriculum guides is now...	8	26	38	21	7	2.94
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
7	2	40	35	16	3.51	9. The use of authorized textbooks is now...	10	22	49	13	6	2.81
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
2	4	16	51	27	3.98	10a. The time teachers spend on coaching students on how to take tests is ...	20	25	20	31	5	2.75
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
1	1	36	40	22	3.82	10b. The provision of out-of-class tutorials by my school in examinable subjects is now ...	4	15	39	35	6	3.23

CHANGE						TEACHING	EFFECT					
Much Less		No Change		Much More			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
1	2	3	4	5	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
16	25	37	18	5	2.72	11. The use of authorized supplementary course materials is now...	10	33	42	10	5	2.66
38	30	28	5	0	1.99	12. The use of non-authorized supplementary course materials is now...	27	32	36	5	1	2.21
						13. Attention to individual **STUDENTS**						
18	24	38	16	4	2.62	a. The individual attention given to WEAK students is now...	22	25	37	12	4	2.52
2	17	68	11	3	2.96	b. The individual attention given to AVERAGE students is now...	7	18	62	11	2	2.83
1	10	38	35	16	3.57	c. The individual attention given to STRONG students is now...	8	14	40	31	8	3.17
11	22	48	14	6	2.81	14. The use of small group instruction is now...	14	20	46	15	6	2.78
2	11	45	27	16	3.43	15. The use of large group instruction is now...	14	24	53	7	2	2.59
0	1	27	51	21	3.93	16. The amount of homework assigned to students is now...	4	28	42	21	5	2.95
15	37	28	18	3	2.58	17. The number of written assignments involving creative or research-based activities assigned to students complete is now...	18	33	27	17	5	2.57
2	5	49	31	14	3.50	18. The number of worksheet-type activities assigned to students is now...	10	21	58	8	4	2.74
14	36	35	10	5	2.55	19. The number of cooperative projects assigned to students is now...	16	30	40	7	8	2.62
2	1	23	43	31	4.00	20. The use of multiple-choice items in classroom tests is now...	20	29	36	11	5	2.51
13	34	36	13	4	2.61	21. The use of open-ended items in classroom tests is now...	14	35	38	8	5	2.53
0	2	43	36	20	3.73	22. The number of tests given during courses is now...	7	23	51	16	4	2.87
1	7	37	39	17	3.64	23. The weight assigned to paper and pencil tests, rather than projects, assignments, labs, etc., in determining your teachers' final grades is now...	11	38	40	7	4	2.53
1	2	9	57	32	4.17	24. The time spent on all examination related activities is now...	25	42	17	12	4	2.27
Much Less		No Change		Much More								
30	42	26	2	1	2.03	25. The number of field trips classes take is now...	32	36	29	2	2	2.06
13	30	53	3	2	2.51	26. The number of labs in classes is now...	14	30	51	3	2	2.49
13	33	49	4	1	2.47	27. The time available for labs is now...	14	31	50	4	1	2.47

UTILIZATION

In this section of the questionnaire we would like you to consider possible uses made of the Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program by you, your teachers, your students, parents, other school administrators, and others:

YOUR USE OF GRADE 12 EXAMINATIONS

The Ministry of Education produces a number of reports based on student examination results. Exam results are reported as individual student marks, school summaries, and provincial summaries. The Ministry also produces exam specifications for all examinable subjects and copies of previously used exams.

Please indicate the **FREQUENCY** or extent to which you use results from the Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program by responding to the items below using the scale:

N/A	This use is Not Applicable to me.
1 - NEVER	This is a use I have never made of the examinations.
2 - SELDOM	This is a use I make infrequently, and occasionally not at all.
3 - SOME	This is a use I make, but only at limited times.
4 - OFTEN	This is a use I make frequently.

In addition, please indicate the **EFFECT** that the Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program has had on these items.

FREQUENCY							EFFECT					
N/A	Never	Seldom	Some	Often		**USE OF EXAMINATION RESULTS - STUDENT SCORES, SCHOOL AVERAGES**	Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
N/A	1	2	3	4	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
25	7	13	42	38	3.12	1. I review the results of the Provincial Examinations for the students in my school...	0	6	52	28	14	3.51
37	22	19	38	21	2.58	2. I compare the Provincial Examination results across the classes in my school...	2	5	64	20	9	3.29
43	17	23	32	28	2.72	3. I compare the Provincial Examination results across the schools in my district...	4	7	61	21	7	3.21
31	7	18	42	33	3.00	4. I compare the marks awarded students by my teachers to the students' Provincial Examination marks...	1	8	51	29	11	3.41
39	37	22	24	17	2.20	5. I compare the Provincial Exam marks of students of teachers in my school with the marks of students of other teachers in my school...	0	10	74	8	9	3.15
43	18	18	42	22	2.68	6. I compare the Provincial Examination marks of students in my school with the marks of other schools in my district...	1	8	65	18	7	3.22
36	23	21	36	21	2.55	7. I compare the Provincial Examination marks of students in my school with the marks of students in other districts...	3	5	62	20	10	3.29
N/A	Never	Seldom	Some	Often		**USE OF EXAMINATION MATERIALS - OLD EXAMINATIONS, EXAM SPECIFICATIONS**						
N/A	1	2	3	4			1	2	3	4	5	
34	0	6	34	60	3.54	8. My teachers use the Provincial Examination Program to define the content of their courses...	16	25	20	30	9	2.92
41	1	4	42	53	3.47	9. My teachers refer to the Ministry of Education's EXAM SPECIFICATIONS in discussions with students ...	10	15	27	30	18	3.29

FREQUENCY						USE OF EXAMINATION MATERIALS - OLD EXAMINATIONS, EXAM SPECIFICATIONS	EFFECT					
N/A	Never	Seldom	Some	Often			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
N/A	1	2	3	4	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
39	1	10	47	42	3.30	10. My teachers explicitly describe the relationship of the course content to the examination by using the EXAM SPECIFICATIONS...	10	26	21	31	11	3.08
43	3	12	37	49	3.32	11. My teachers use the EXAM SPECIFICATIONS for the development of their own classroom tests...	12	19	25	33	11	3.11
53	14	17	43	26	2.82	12. The EXAM SPECIFICATIONS are used by my teachers for the development of school-wide tests ...	6	19	40	29	6	3.10
37	7	18	38	37	3.05	13. My teachers administer old Provincial Examinations to students as a complete two-hour examination ...	6	15	27	38	15	3.40
34	0	3	37	59	3.56	14. My teachers administer selected questions from old Provincial Examinations at relevant points during their courses ...	5	9	21	41	24	3.69
41	21	32	35	12	2.38	15. How often should results of old Provincial Examinations or items count toward the student grades in the course?	10	10	48	25	8	3.12
42	4	8	58	31	3.16	16. How often are these results used to guide instruction?	13	18	30	25	13	3.07

USE OF THE EXAMINATION RESULTS BY OTHERS

The Provincial Examination Program could be used in a number of ways by other people in the educational system.

We are interested in your perception of the uses being made of the Provincial Examination Program by these other people. **Please indicate the extent to which examination results are used as described in the statements below, and also indicate the effect of this use upon the educational system.**

FREQUENCY						USE OF THE EXAMINATION RESULTS BY OTHERS	EFFECT					
I Don't Know	Never	Seldom	Some	Often			Very Detrimental		No Effect *		Very Beneficial	
?	1	2	3	4	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
60	47	18	22	13	2.00	1. I use the examination results in the evaluation of my TEACHERS.	25	18	41	10	7	2.56
59	9	20	46	25	2.87	2. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS use the examination results in the evaluation of TEACHERS.	29	37	23	5	6	2.22
65	17	17	35	31	2.81	3. The SCHOOL BOARD uses the examination results in the evaluation of TEACHERS.	39	28	30	2	2	1.98
55	2	11	45	42	3.27	4. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS use the examination results in the evaluation of SCHOOLS.	32	31	20	11	6	2.27
58	3	17	41	38	3.14	5. The SCHOOL BOARD uses the examination results in the evaluation of SCHOOLS.	38	29	24	7	2	2.04

FREQUENCY						USE OF THE EXAMINATION RESULTS BY OTHERS	EFFECT					
I Don't Know	Never	Seldom	Some	Often			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
?	1	2	3	4	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
40	13	18	44	24	2.79	6. PARENTS use their knowledge of the examination results in the evaluation of my SCHOOL.	24	24	41	5	5	2.42
50	27	28	31	15	2.34	7. PARENTS use the examination results in deciding which high school to enroll their child.	25	22	47	6	0	2.34
27	3	3	17	77	3.68	8. UNIVERSITIES use the examination results to select students for admission.	12	17	26	31	15	3.21
29	9	16	33	42	3.07	9. COLLEGES use the examination results to select students for admission.	10	17	42	24	7	3.02
49	24	46	23	7	2.13	10. EMPLOYERS use the examination results to select students for jobs.	6	15	71	8	0	2.80
72	69	23	5	3	1.41	11. I use the examination results in determining teaching assignments for teachers.	19	12	62	5	2	2.60
58	4	2	40	54	3.46	12. The MINISTRY of EDUCATION uses the examination program to influence the content and nature of the Grade 12 curriculum.	33	25	22	16	3	2.30
57	4	0	26	70	3.63	13. The MINISTRY of EDUCATION uses the examination results to compare the different school districts.	44	24	16	10	6	2.10
71	18	13	33	38	2.90	14. The Provincial Examination Program influences the allocation of educational resources.	43	25	29	4	0	1.94
30	40	10	24	26	2.36	15. Provincial Examination results are used to determine local awards and scholarships in my school.	6	11	59	20	4	3.04

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. How many grade 12 students are enrolled in your school?

10	0 to 50	37	51 to 200	36	201 to 350	13	351 to 500	3	501 to 1000	1	over 1000

2. How many Grade 12 Provincial Exams were written in your school last year?

10	0 to 50	23	51 to 200	14	201 to 350	16	351 to 500	23	501 to 1000	13	over 1000

3. How many Grade 12 course credits were given that **did not** have have a Provincial Exam component?

27	0 to 50	14	51 to 200	11	201 to 350	6	351 to 500	16	501 to 1000	26	over 1000

4. How many years have you been a Principal in this school?	83	0 to 3	7	4 to 5	10	6 or over
5. How many years have you been a Principal in your career?	83	0 to 6	0	7 to 10	17	11 or over
6. Would you describe your school as being ...	37	Urban	28	Suburban	35	Rural
7. Have you served on a Provincial Examination Committee? (e.g., Board of Examiners, Marking, Exam construction or Review)			12	Yes	88	No

SCHOOL CLIMATE

The Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program could affect some of the general characteristics of schools that are difficult to pinpoint, but nevertheless are important to the "educational climate" in which the students and staff function.

Please indicate the extent of the change on each of the factors listed below and whether this change has had a beneficial or detrimental effect on the climate of your school.

CHANGE						SCHOOL CLIMATE	EFFECT					
Much Worse		No Change		Much Better	Mean		Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	Mean
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
3	22	52	17	7	3.03	1. The overall tone of my school following the introduction of the Grade 12 exams is now ...	7	20	50	14	10	2.99
2	11	74	10	3	3.00	2. The relationship between teachers and students is now...	6	7	75	8	5	2.99
Much Lower		No Change		Much Higher								
15	51	27	5	3	2.30	3. The morale of teachers is now ...	26	44	21	5	4	2.17
1	8	39	42	10	3.52	4. The "status" of examinable subjects is now ...	4	21	50	20	6	3.03
9	34	45	8	3	2.61	5. The "status" of non-examinable subjects is now ...	14	27	52	6	2	2.56
Much Less		No Change		Much Greater								
0	6	25	46	23	3.86	6. Use of school counselling services for personal problems is now ...	5	28	27	29	12	3.16
0	4	27	46	22	3.86	7. Use of school counselling services for vocational information is now ...	2	8	27	45	18	3.70
23	54	14	6	4	2.13	8. Teachers' sense of control over what they teach is now...	22	54	12	8	4	2.17
2	7	61	21	9	3.28	9. I perceive that public confidence in my school is now ...	5	6	60	20	9	3.22
7	26	25	28	13	3.16	10. Teachers' workload in teaching Grade 12 courses is now...	13	51	26	9	1	2.34
20	22	11	31	17	3.05	11. The stress I perceive in teachers is now...	35	51	10	3	1	1.84
9	16	67	8	1	2.76	12. Teachers' interaction with teachers of the lower grades is now...	9	17	66	6	2	2.75
2	18	67	9	5	2.96	13. Teachers' interaction with other Grade 12 subjects is now ...	6	17	64	8	5	2.89
0	1	35	51	14	3.77	14. The test-wiseness of students entering Grade 12 is now ...	2	8	43	38	8	3.43

GENERAL EFFECTS

Listed below are some possible effects of the Provincial Examination Program. Please indicate the extent to which these effects exist and the effect upon the education process.

CHANGE Much Less 1	2	No Change 3	4	Much Greater 5	Mean	GENERAL EFFECTS	EFFECT Very Detrimental 1	2	No Effect 3	4	Very Beneficial 5	Mean
3	9	68	13	7	3.13	1. As a result of the Grade 12 Examination Program, class sizes are now ...	11	21	60	7	1	2.66
0	4	53	27	16	3.55	2. As a result of the Grade 12 Examination Program, school timetabling problems are now ...	13	29	54	4	0	2.49
0	3	54	38	6	3.46	3. The attention given in lower grades to curricular material linked to grade 12 examinable subjects is now...	2	26	57	11	4	2.88
33	46	17	1	3	1.94	4. Adaptation of curriculum to meet individual student's interests is now ...	37	43	16	3	2	1.91
1	1	38	35	26	3.83	5. The use of school-wide examinations in grade 12 is now ...	2	22	43	24	9	3.17
1	0	42	36	22	3.77	6. The use of examinations in lower grades is now...	5	23	47	22	3	2.95
7	0	84	8	1	2.96	7. The use of district-wide examinations in grade 12 is now ...	1	6	87	2	3	3.00
2	11	68	15	5	3.10	8. In-service opportunities related to grade 12 courses are now...	8	14	58	15	5	2.95

INTENTIONS OF THE PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS PROGRAM

The Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program was introduced in the 1983/84 school year. Please indicate the extent to which you perceive its stated intentions have been achieved and the effect upon the B.C. educational system.

CHANGE Mean	I Don't Know ?	Not at All 1	To Some Extent 2	Yes Definitely 3	INTENTIONS	EFFECT Very Detrimental 1	2	No Effect 3	4	Very Beneficial 5	Mean
1.76	31	37	50	13	1. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying to university?	4	13	34	36	12	3.38
1.55	33	54	36	10	2. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying to colleges?	6	9	53	24	8	3.19
1.13	48	87	13	0	3. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying for employment?	1	9	79	8	3	3.01
2.52	34	0	48	52	4. Is the provincial curriculum being more closely followed within the schools of British Columbia?	4	30	21	39	7	3.16
1.82	29	35	49	16	5. Are the students provided with additional challenge?	10	22	29	30	9	3.07
1.65	40	50	35	15	6. Do teachers have enhanced confidence in their own abilities in the areas of curriculum and evaluation?	10	17	42	23	10	3.06
1.28	29	79	13	7	7. Has the status of the teaching profession been enhanced?	24	17	43	7	8	2.59

Please write your comments in the following space . . .

What are the benefits/problems of the Provincial Examination Program?

Benefits:

Problems:

What is your evaluation of the Provincial Examination Program?

How would you change the program?

Have your standards for students' achievement changed as a result of the Provincial Examination Program?

Appendix H

Superintendent Questionnaire

All figures recorded in this appendix are *valid* percentage of respondents, rounded to the nearest whole percent. *Valid* percents do NOT include omits, "I don't know", or "N/A" in the base of calculations.

Provincial Examination Impact

SUPERINTENDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

N = 35 Note: Figures in valid percent (%)

Beginning in 1983/84, students in British Columbia have been required to write the end-of-course provincial examination for each Grade 12 academic course in which they enrol. Please indicate the change that the Provincial Examination Program has had on these students AND whether the change has been beneficial or detrimental. Please write your comments in the open-ended section at the end of the questionnaire. Your comments are most welcome and will be added to our database.

CHANGE						STUDENTS	EFFECT					
Much Less		No Change		Much Greater			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
1	2	3	4	5	Mean	1. What are the effects on the participation of Grade 12 students in the following extracurricular activities?	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
0	16	75	9	0	2.94	a. School Sports	0	18	79	3	0	2.85
0	19	78	3	0	2.84	b. Drama	0	21	79	0	0	2.79
3	16	75	6	0	2.84	c. Music	3	24	73	0	0	2.70
0	9	91	0	0	2.91	d. School Government	0	9	91	0	0	2.91
0	9	91	0	0	2.91	e. School Clubs	0	6	94	0	0	2.94
0	16	72	9	3	3.00	f. Part-time Employment	3	12	76	9	0	2.91
0	0	44	53	3	3.59	g. Study Groups	0	0	53	41	6	3.53
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	0	38	59	3	3.66	2. Students' use of out-of-school tutors for grade 12 subjects is now ...	0	6	56	38	0	3.31
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	6	13	69	13	3.88	3. The stress teachers perceive in their students is now ...	6	52	18	24	0	2.61
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	0	80	10	10	3.30	4. Student participation in summer school is now ...	0	7	84	10	0	3.03
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	34	50	16	0	2.81	5. Student selection of examinable courses is now ...	3	19	56	22	0	2.97
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	3	50	44	3	3.47	6. Student selection of non-examinable courses is now ...	3	31	63	3	0	2.66
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
7	3	48	39	3	3.29	7. The interest in the Provincial Scholarship Program is now ...	6	3	47	44	0	3.28
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	0	59	41	0	3.41	8. Students' sense of responsibility is now ...	0	0	55	42	3	3.48
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	3	25	69	3	3.72	9. Student workload in grade 12 courses is now ...	0	30	39	30	0	3.00
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
3	6	53	38	0	3.25	10. The achievement of students in their grade 12 course(s) is now...	6	6	52	33	3	3.21
Much Lower		No Change		Much Higher								
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	13	75	6	6	3.06	11. The morale of grade 12 students is now ...	3	12	73	6	6	3.00
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	3	88	9	0	3.06	12. The morale of students throughout the schools is now...	0	6	85	6	3	3.06
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	6	53	38	3	3.38	13. Grade 12 students' motivation to learn is now ...	0	9	49	36	6	3.39

TEACHING

In this section of the questionnaire we would like you to consider the changes in some aspects of teaching brought about by the reintroduction of the Grade 12 Provincial Examinations.

We have listed a number of aspects of teaching below. Please indicate the extent to which you feel teaching has been affected by the Grade 12 Examination Program and if, in your opinion, the change or lack of change has had an overall detrimental or beneficial effect on education.

For each aspect of teaching listed we would like you to complete TWO scales:

First, the extent of the CHANGE.
Second, the EFFECT of the change upon students.

CHANGE						TEACHING	EFFECT					
Much Narrower		No Change		Much Broader			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
1	2	3	4	5	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
15	58	9	15	3	2.33	1. The breadth or scope of content of courses is now...	15	52	15	18	0	2.36
Much Shallower		No Change		Much Deeper								
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
3	30	15	46	6	3.21	2. The depth of coverage of courses is now...	9	28	21	42	0	2.97
Much Less		No Change		Much More								
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
0	6	30	55	9	3.67	3. The emphasis placed on memorization and rote learning in teaching is now...	9	46	36	9	0	2.45
3	39	21	33	3	2.94	4. The emphasis placed on problem-solving in teaching is now...	6	36	21	33	3	2.91
6	39	24	27	3	2.82	5. The emphasis placed on critical thinking in teaching is now...	9	36	24	27	3	2.79
27	52	15	6	0	2.00	6. The time spent on discretionary topics such as current affairs and optional topics is now...	24	46	21	9	0	2.15
3	46	42	9	0	2.58	7. The time spent on locally developed courses is now...	3	38	53	3	3	2.66
0	3	36	61	0	3.58	8. The use of provincial curriculum guides is now...	0	9	52	36	3	3.33
0	6	47	41	6	·3.47	9. The use of authorized textbooks is now...	3	6	69	22	0	3.09
0	3	3	64	30	4.21	10a. The time teachers spend on coaching students on how to take tests is ...	3	30	15	46	6	3.21
0	0	33	58	9	3.76	10b. The provision of out-of-class tutorials, by the schools in my district, in examinable subjects is now ...	0	12	39	46	3	3.39

CHANGE						TEACHING	EFFECT					
Much Less		No Change		Much More			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
1	2	3	4	5	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
3	36	49	12	0	2.70	11. The use of authorized supplementary course materials is now...	0	36	55	9	0	2.73
19	31	38	9	3	2.47	12. The use of non-authorized supplementary course materials is now...	16	31	44	6	3	2.50
						13 Attention to individual **STUDENTS**						
3	16	48	29	3	3.13	a. **The individual attention given to WEAK students is now...**	3	16	48	29	3	3.13
0	10	68	23	0	3.13	b. The individual attention given to AVERAGE students is now...	3	13	61	23	0	3.03
3	3	32	45	16	3.68	c. The individual attention given to STRONG students is now...	10	13	39	32	7	3.13
3	23	61	13	0	2.84	14. The use of small group instruction is now...	7	13	68	13	0	2.87
0	10	68	16	7	3.19	15. The use of large group instruction is now...	3	13	74	10	0	2.90
0	0	39	58	3	3.65	16. The amount of homework assigned to students is now...	0	7	55	36	3	3.35
3	39	42	16	0	2.71	17. The number of written assignments involving creative or research-based activities assigned to students is now...	7	39	39	16	0	2.65
0	3	61	23	13	3.45	18. The number of worksheet-type activities assigned to students is now...	7	23	68	3	0	2.68
9	25	38	28	0	2.84	19. The number of cooperative projects assigned to students is now...	9	22	41	28	0	2.88
0	3	48	36	13	3.58	20. The use of multiple-choice items in classroom tests is now...	7	39	52	3	0	2.52
3	29	55	13	0	2.77	21. The use of open-ended items in classroom tests is now...	7	27	53	13	0	2.73
0	0	23	71	7	3.84	22. The number of tests given during course(s) is now...	0	29	42	26	3	3.03
3	7	39	42	10	3.48	23. The weight assigned to paper and pencil tests, rather than projects, assignments, labs, etc., in determining final grades is now...	13	39	39	10	0	2.45
0	0	22	56	22	4.00	24. The time spent on all examination related activities is now...	19	31	34	13	3	2.50
Much Less		No Change		Much More								
1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	
15	33	52	0	0	2.36	25. The number of field trips classes take is now...	9	36	55	0	0	2.45
3	30	61	6	0	2.70	26. The number of labs in classes is now...	3	33	58	6	0	2.67
3	15	76	6	0	2.85	27. The time available for labs is now...	6	15	77	6	0	2.79

UTILIZATION

In this section of the questionnaire we would like you to consider the uses made of the Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program by you, colleagues, school administrators, teachers, students, parents, and others:

YOUR USE OF GRADE 12 EXAMINATIONS

The Ministry of Education produces a number of reports based on student examination results. Exam results are **reported as individual student marks, school summaries, and provincial summaries.** The Ministry also produces exam specifications for all examinable subjects and copies of previously used exams.

Please indicate the extent to which you use results from the Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program by responding to the items below using the scale:

N/A	This use is Not Applicable.
1 - NEVER	This is a use I have never made of the examinations.
2 - SELDOM	This is a use I make infrequently, and occasionally not at all.
3 - SOME	This is a use I make, but only at limited times.
4 - OFTEN	This is a use I make frequently.

FREQUENCY							EFFECT					
N/A N/A	Never 1	Seldom 2	Some 3	Often 4	Mean	USE OF EXAMINATION RESULTS - STUDENT SCORES, SCHOOL AVERAGES	Very Detrimental 1	2	No Effect 3	4	Very Beneficial 5	Mean
0	0	3	18	79	3.76	1. I review the results of the Provincial Examinations for the students in my district...	0	3	9	63	25	4.09
14	17	20	17	47	2.93	2. I compare the Provincial Examination results across the classes in my district...	3	3	41	41	10	3.52
31	0	4	38	58	3.54	3. I compare the Provincial Examination results across the schools in my district...	0	4	42	31	23	3.73
	0	3	33	64	3.61	4. I compare the marks awarded students by teachers to the students' Provincial Examination marks...	0	3	18	58	21	3.97
14	30	27	13	30	2.43	5. I compare the Provincial Examination marks of students, for each teacher, with the marks of students of other teachers...	10	[illegible]	63	13	13	3.20
26	12	19	31	39	2.96	6. I compare the Provincial Examination marks of students, for each school, with the marks of students of other schools...	7	0	46	29	18	3.50
0	3	13	29	55	3.35	7. I compare the Provincial Examination marks of students, for my district, with the marks of students of other districts...	3	3	36	39	19	3.68

N/A N/A	Never 1	Seldom 2	Some 3	Often 4		USE OF EXAMINATION MATERIALS - OLD EXAMINATIONS, EXAM SPECIFICATIONS	1	2	3	4	5	
0	0	9	49	42	3.33	8. Teachers use the Provincial Examination Program to define the content of their courses...	12	33	18	27	9	2.88
0	3	15	49	33	3.12	9. Teachers refer to the Ministry of Education's EXAM SPECIFICATIONS in discussions with students ...	6	6	31	38	19	3.56

FREQUENCY						USE OF EXAMINATION MATERIALS - OLD EXAMINATIONS, EXAM SPECIFICATIONS	EFFECT					
N/A	Never	Seldom	Some	Often			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
N/A	1	2	3	4	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
0	0	20	53	27	3.07	10. Teachers explicitly describe the relationship of the course content to the examination by using the EXAM SPECIFICATIONS...	7	10	36	42	7	3.32
0	3	16	58	23	3.00	11. Teachers use the EXAM SPECIFICATIONS for the development of their own classroom tests...	0	7	36	52	7	3.58
0	11	39	43	7	2.46	12. The EXAM SPECIFICATIONS are used by teachers for the development of school-wide tests...	0	11	56	30	4	3.26
0	3	23	53	20	2.90	13. Teachers administer old Provincial Examinations to students as a complete two-hour examination ...	10	7	37	37	10	3.30
0	0	13	39	48	3.35	14. Teachers administer selected questions from old Provincial Examinations at relevant points during their courses ...	0	3	32	39	26	3.87
0	17	41	38	3	2.28	15. How often should results of old Provincial Examinations or items count toward the student grades in the course?	3	10	62	24	0	3.07
0	3	22	53	22	2.94	16. How often should these results be used to guide instruction?	7	10	33	40	10	3.37

USE OF THE EXAMINATION RESULTS BY OTHERS

The Provincial Examination Program could be used in a number of ways by other people in the educational system.

We are interested in your perception of the uses being made of the Provincial Examination Program by these other people. **Please indicate the extent to which examination results are used as described in the statements below, and also indicate the effect of this use upon the educational system.**

FREQUENCY						USE OF THE EXAMINATION RESULTS BY OTHERS	EFFECT					
I Don't Know	Never	Seldom	Some	Often			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
?	1	2	3	4	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
6	36	49	15	0	1.79	1. SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS use the examination results in the evaluation of TEACHERS.	16	9	63	9	3	2.75
	73	21	6	0	1.33	2. I use the examination results in the evaluation of TEACHERS.	23	3	63	9	3	2.69
9	97	0	3	0	1.06	3. The SCHOOL BOARD uses the examination results in the evaluation of TEACHERS.	28	3	59	6	3	2.53
	24	36	39	0	2.15	4. I use the examination results in the evaluation of SCHOOLS.	10	10	33	47	0	3.17
9	59	19	22	0	1.63	5. The SCHOOL BOARD uses the examination results in the evaluation of SCHOOLS.	29	3	45	23	0	2.61

FREQUENCY						USE OF THE EXAMINATION RESULTS BY OTHERS	EFFECT					
I Don't Know	Never	Seldom	Some	Often			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
?	1	2	3	4	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
11	16	29	39	16	2.55	6. **PARENTS** use the examination results (their knowledge of them) in the evaluation of SCHOOLS.	16	16	48	19	0	2.71
43	60	10	25	5	1.75	7. **PARENTS** use the examination results in deciding which high school to enroll their child.	21	13	50	13	4	2.67
26	0	0	23	77	3.77	8. **UNIVERSITIES** use the examination results to select students for admission.	13	16	36	32	3	2.97
23	0	19	33	48	3.30	9. **COLLEGES** use the examination results to select students for admission.	10	17	50	23	0	2.97
23	22	30	44	4	2.30	10. **EMPLOYERS** use the examination results to select students for jobs.	10	20	57	13	0	2.73
17	10	38	45	7	2.48	11. **SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS** use the examination results in determining teaching assignments for teachers.	7	10	33	43	7	3.33
51	0	12	65	24	3.12	12. The **MINISTRY of EDUCATION** uses the examination program to influence the content and nature of the Grade 12 curriculum.	7	26	52	11	4	2.78
43	10	20	30	40	2.90	13. The **MINISTRY of EDUCATION** uses the examination results to compare the different school districts.	29	18	46	7	0	2.32
40	29	48	19	5	2.00	14. The Provincial Examination Program influences the allocation of educational resources.	19	19	59	4	0	2.48
11	29	16	42	13	2.39	15. Provincial Examination results are used to determine local awards and scholarships.	3	3	62	24	7	3.28

Please continue . . .

SCHOOL CLIMATE

The Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program could affect some of the general characteristics of schools that are difficult to pinpoint, but nevertheless are important to the "educational climate" in which the students and staff function.

Please indicate the extent of the change on each of the factors listed below and whether this change has had a beneficial or detrimental effect on the climate of your schools.

CHANGE						SCHOOL CLIMATE	EFFECT					
Much Worse		No Change		Much Better			Very Detrimental		No Effect		Very Beneficial	
1	2	3	4	5	Mean		1	2	3	4	5	Mean
0	3	75	19	3	3.22	1. The overall tone of schools in my district is now ...	0	7	70	23	0	3.17
0	3	69	28	0	3.25	2. The relationship between teachers and students is now...	0	7	70	20	3	3.20
Much Lower		No Change		Much Higher								
0	26	55	19	0	2.94	3. The morale of teachers is now ...	3	27	50	20	0	2.87
0	0	41	50	9	3.69	4. The "status" of examinable subjects is now ...	7	20	40	30	3	3.03
3	50	41	6	0	2.50	5. The "status" of non-examinable subjects is now ...	10	43	40	7	0	2.43
Much Less		No Change		Much Greater								
0	16	55	26	3	3.16	6. Use of school counselling services for personal problems is now ...	7	24	59	10	0	2.72
0	13	58	29	0	3.16	7. Use of school counselling services for vocational information is now ...	7	14	52	28	0	3.00
15	52	27	6	0	2.24	8. Teachers sense of control over what they teach is now...	16	42	32	10	0	2.35
0	3	64	27	6	3.36	9. I perceive that public confidence in the schools is now ...	3	0	61	26	10	3.39
3	13	63	22	0	3.03	10. Teachers workload in teaching Grade 12 courses is now...	7	13	67	10	3	2.90
3	28	44	25	0	2.91	11. The stress I perceive in teachers is now...	3	50	40	7	0	2.50
6	13	72	9	0	2.84	12. Teachers' interaction with teachers of the lower grades is now...	10	13	67	7	3	2.80
0	13	75	13	0	3.00	13. Teachers' interaction with other Grade 12 subjects is now ...	3	17	70	7	3	2.90
0	3	16	74	7	3.84	14. The test-wiseness of students entering Grade 12 is now ...	0	7	24	66	3	3.66

GENERAL EFFECTS

Listed below are some possible effects of the Provincial Examination Program. Please indicate the extent to which these effects exist and the effect upon the education process.

CHANGE Much Less 1	2	No Change 3	4	Much Greater 5	Mean	GENERAL EFFECTS	EFFECT Very Detrimental 1	2	No Effect 3	4	Very Beneficial 5	Mean
0	0	100	0	0	3.00	1. As a result of the Grade 12 Examination Program, class size is now ...	0	3	97	0	0	2.97
0	3	73	24	0	3.21	2. As a result of the Grade 12 Examination Program, school timetabling problems are now ...	0	23	77	0	0	2.77
0	0	61	36	3	3.42	3. The attention given in lower grades to curricular material linked to grade 12 examinable subjects is now...	3	6	63	25	3	3.19
9	47	28	16	0	2.50	4. Adaptation of curriculum to meet individual student interests is now ...	16	42	26	16	0	2.42
0	0	53	41	6	3.53	5. The use of school-wide examinations in grade 12 is now ...	0	7	61	32	0	3.26
0	0	39	52	9	3.70	6. The use of examinations in lower grades is now...	3	6	47	44	0	3.31
3	3	81	13	0	3.03	7. The use of district-wide examinations is now ...	0	0	84	16	0	3.16
0	3	69	25	3	3.28	8. In-service opportunities related to grade 12 courses are now...	0	3	71	23	3	3.26

INTENTIONS OF THE PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS PROGRAM

The Provincial Grade 12 Examination Program was introduced in the 1983/84 school year. Please indicate the extent to which you perceive its stated intentions have been achieved and the effect upon the B.C. educational system.

CHANGE Mean	I Don't Know ?	Not at All 1	To Some Extent 2	Yes Definitely 3	INTENTIONS	EFFECT Very Detrimental 1	2	No Effect 3	4	Very Beneficial 5	Mean
1.62	40	52	33	14	1. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying to university?	0	8	58	27	8	3.35
1.61	34	48	44	9	2. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying to colleges?	0	7	63	26	4	3.26
1.17	49	83	17	0	3. Has the examination program led to more equitable treatment of students applying for employment?	0	4	88	8	0	3.04
2.39	11	3	55	42	4. Is the provincial curriculum being more closely followed within the schools of British Columbia?	0	13	34	34	19	3.59
1.84	9	28	59	13	5. Are the students provided with additional challenge?	6	16	22	53	3	3.31
1.59	17	48	45	7	6. Do teachers have enhanced confidence in their own abilities in the areas of curriculum and evaluation?	3	17	37	40	3	3.23
1.40	14	63	33	3	7. Has the status of the teaching profession been enhanced?	7	13	53	23	3	3.03

Please write your comments in the following space . . .

What are the benefits/problems of the Provincial Examination Program?

Benefits:

Problems:

What is your evaluation of the Provincial Examination Program?

How would you change the program?

Have your standards for students' achievement changed as a result of the Provincial Examination Program?

Appendix I

Employers: Interview Protocols and Notes

I.1 Canada Employment

I.1.1 Introduction

- use introduction to yourself and the project
- refer any questions or discussions of project in general to me: they can phone or I'll phone them.

JOHN ANDERSON
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA
PHONE: 721 7792

I.1.2 Questions

1. what are the major criteria in selecting individuals for employment?
2. what educational criteria are most often used?
    - high school graduation
    - high school grades
    - courses taken
    - school(s) attended
    - references from teachers, principal, counselor
3. are high school grades used in employment decisions?

- by CEIC
- by employers
- are they used explicitly
  - submitted as part of application procedures
  - is this *pro forma* or do they actually base decisions upon these grades?
- is there any distinction between school awarded grades and grades from Provincial Examinations?

4. Has the introduction of the provincial exam program had any effect on the hiring practices of employers who use CEIC?
   - IF SO, what ?
   - Any effects on CEIC operations ?
5. How much variation is there across different employers?
   - which employers tend to use grades (particularly Provincial Exam results)
6. Who are contact people and phone numbers for:
   - MacDonald's Restaurants
   - Forestry companies (at least two)
   - Mining companies (at least two)
   - Eaton's
   - Save-On Foods and Safeway
   - Woodward's
   - Miltary
   - Provincial Government Services
   - Coast Hotels
   - BC Hydro
   - BC Telephone

I.2 Employers

Conduct phone interviews with personnel officers with the following companies:

- MacDonald's Restaurants
- Forestry companies (at least two)

- Mining companies (at least two)
- Eaton's
- Save-On Foods and Safeway
- Woodward's
- Miltary
- Provincial Government Services
- Coast Hotels
- BC Hydro
- BC Telephone

I.2.1 Introduction

- use introduction to yourself and the project
- refer any questions or discussions of project in general to me: they can phone or I'll phone them.

JOHN ANDERSON
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA
PHONE: 721 7792

I.2.2 Questions

1. Does your company hire individuals who recently come from high school:
    - high school leavers
    - graduates
        - fulltime
        - part-time
        - seasonal
2. What are the main criteria used for selection of candidates for employment?
3. Are high school grades used?
    - always
    - for certain jobs only

  - if no, go to #5...
  - if so, which ones?

4. Any distinction made between school grades and grades from the Provincial Examinations (finals)?

5. Has the use of Provincial Examination grades resulted in:

   - more accurate decisions?
   - fairer treatment of individuals?
   - anything else?

6. If high school grades not used, why doesn't your firm/insitution use them?

7. In general, what effects of the Provincial Examination Program have you noticed?

   - for example, absenteeism, punctuality or "work ethic".

Appendix J

Post Secondary Institutes Admissions Officers Interview Protocols and Notes

J.1 General Introduction

- use introduction to yourself and the project (the overview statement that Dave Blackmore has prepared)[1]
- refer any questions or discussions of project in general to Dave Blackmore or John Anderson
- they can phone or I'll phone them.

DAVE BLACKMORE
EDUCATIONAL MEASUREMENT RESEARCH GROUP
UBC
PHONE: 228 4145

JOHN ANDERSON
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA
PHONE: 721 7792

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[1] These interviews, as well as the transcripts and summaries contained in the body of the document, were conducted and authored by Susan Brigden, a graduate student in measurement and evaluation U.B.C.

J.2 Questions

1. what are the major criteria in selecting individuals for admission to your institute?

2. are there differences for different programs?

    - can you tell me which programs have different admission requirements and what are they?

3. I'm going to read to you a number of different educational criteria used by PSI's in admission decisions. These include high school graduation, high school grades, courses taken, school or schools attended, and references. Will you please indicate to me how often each of these criteria are used by your institution in selecting individuals for admission? I want you to tell me for each criterion whether it is used very often, often, or not often.

    - high school graduation
    - high school grades
    - courses taken
    - school(s) attended
    - references from teachers, principal, counselor
    - Can you think of any other educational criterion used by your institution that I have not mentioned?

4. are high school grades used in :

    - admission decisions? whether the student gets into the institution or not
    - placement decisons ? if admitted, which program the student can take
    - are they used explicitly
        - submitted as part of application procedures?
        - is this *pro forma* or do they actually base decisions upon these grades?
    - do you look specifically at Provincial Examinations marks?
    - do you make a distinction between the grades awarded by the school and those from the final examinations?
    - do you have early admissions?

5. Has the introduction of the provincial exam program had any effect on the admissions procedures or policy of this insitution ?
   — IF SO, what ?

- Probes:
  - more equitable treatment of students
  - better information to base decisions upon
  - changed the timelines for admissions procedures
    - it is now slower than in the past
    - it is more efficient than in the past
  - consistency in information about student academic abilities

6. What other effects has the Grade 12 Provincial Examinations had?

   - different attitudes of incoming students
   - more consistent information across all high schools
   - more administrative tasks to complete for our office
   - more forms to fill out for students

7. I have no more questions to ask. Perhaps you have something that you would like to add with regard to the impact the Provincial Examination Program has had on your institution? Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

Appendix K

Summaries and Transcripts of Focus Groups

This appendix contains notes and transcripts from the various parent, student, teacher, and administrator focus groups held around the province. In reading these comments, it is very important that one keep in mind the context within which the focus groups were conducted. In general, the participants in the focus groups usually first noted that they basically agreed with the examinations program, and thought that the program was basically sound. They then went on to use most of the time available to point out areas where they thought change should take place. As such, the tendency is for most of the comments to be what would be considered negative. With this in mind, the fact that most of the comments are in a negative vein should not be taken to infer that the participants were strongly opposed to the examinations program.

In addition, there was no attempt to select focus group participants to be representative of the population. In selecting the sites for the focus groups, consideration was given to a variety of geographical locations. Once a site was selected, a local administrator was requested to select the participants on the basis of their own judgement. As such, no specific comment, or groups of comments, should be taken to be representative of the general population of students, parents, teachers, or administrators.

Despite the fact that these transcripts are not representative of the populations, and are probably biased toward the negative, they are included here for the reader's interest. As was previously pointed out, the examinations program is a high-stakes program for individuals. The reporting of general trends, means, and other summary statistics, based on group data, tends to mask the impacts that the program can have on individuals. The anecdotes contained in this appendix will provide the reader with an appreciation of some of the feelings, opinions, and situations applicable to single individuals within the larger groups. However, the reader is cautioned not to interpret any of the comments out of the contexts explained above.

K.1 Students

A vast majority of the students reported a general dislike for examinations. The marked emphasis on the importance of the examinations by teachers was viewed as a fault. This was particularly the case since the exam consisted of a single 2 hour session and it counted "for the whole year". It was viewed as a "make or break" situation in which you could lose the whole year. Even item level performance was viewed as all or nothing — you either did very well on an item or zeroed out.

Students experienced considerable stress induced by the examinations, even though they were not going to write them until June. The stress is created by the focus placed upon the exams by the school through the teachers of grade 12 subjects. Stress was also induced by teachers who apparently did not emphasize exam material in "examinable" courses — the students viewed this as unreasonable since it would likely mean a rush at the end of the year (April-June) to cover all the necessary material. Teachers who were preparing students for the final exams were viewed as better, more realistic in their treatment of the course.

Students viewed the exams as having some technical problems. The 2 hour length was viewed as inadequate to test an extensive range of achievements that would (should) be acquired over the whole course. The focus of memory-based tasks was viewed as limiting the scope of what kinds of learning outcomes can be tested — certainly divergent and critical thinking can not be adequately tested.

STRESS!! You don't sleep

There have to be exams to be fair. If they weren't there, one school or one teacher could sink you or put you somewhere that you can't handle.

There is really no change because of the exams themselves. I had to memorize as much for Alg 11 as I have to for Alg 12.

The exams only test what you memorize and not what you really know.

Even in Grade 10 we are streamed to exams or not. Once you decide you want to try for university there are very few choices.

I wanted to take drama and stagecraft, but I can't. There are no exams in those courses so they are no good for anything.

The exams make everything standardized: what you learn, how much time you spend on it, how you're tested...

Lots of kids don't take courses because there is an exam in it. They take courses that don't have exams. History 12 and Western Civilization 12 are good examples. Lots of kids want to take History 12 because its interesting but there is an exam so they take Western Civilization instead.

It shouldn't be worth so much. If I don't do really well on that day it counts too much even if I know a lot. 70-30 would be better. Howver, it has to count enough to make it important.

You have to learn to write exams for university. We should have more exams down as low as grade 8. I wish I had to write more exams.

Our teachers make courses with exams harder than they should be to prepare us for the exams. Then we can whiz through.

I don't see the point of memorizing a whole lot of things just so you can forget them the day after the exam.

Our school is very cliquey. You have the academics and the non-academics. You only hang around with your group. In smaller schools that doesn't happen though.

We couldn't go to the drama festival this year because the kids had to study for the exams. It really depends on whether you are on the semester system or not. You have to do fewer things on the outside as you go up the grades, you can't afford the time to do a lot, you have to work. You have to set priorities. Lots of us have part time jobs so we can get enough money to go to university and the exams don't take that into account (teachers wouldn't either; they have no sympathy for having to work)

Teachers teach to the exam. When you ask why we have to learn something it is because its on the exam; never because you need it for life. You can't do interesting things because they aren't on the exam. Sometimes you ask questions about things you are interested in and wonder about; but the teacher will tell you not to worry about that because it won't be on the exam.

You only worry about doing well on the exam, not what you are learning.

Last year in Bi 11 we got lots of news clips and current developments in Biology. This year we don't get that because we have to cover the stuff for the exam (and we don't have time to do a good job of that either)

Sometimes all of us in the class will be confused about something but the teacher doesn't have time to go back over it because we have to get on to other things that will be on the exam.

Gives a guarantee of a better mark. I always do better on exams than in class work because of my work habits. I don't always turn in homework and stuff like that. They don't know about your work habits on exams. (Problem of confusing effort and work habits in academic achievement mark)

They are a good motivator. They make you scared so you study and then when you write them they are easy.

What is taught in class is not the same as what is on the exam. English is a prime example. Not so in sciences and math. The exams reflect the curriculum in those subjects.(Problem of exam-curriculum match) One student knew that tables of specs were there and was told that the course would cover those things. The other did not even know that teachers got a table of specs; (thought that teachers had to guess what would be tested)

Teachers are very wishy-washy about what is going to be on the exam. They tell you some things but they don't want you to be too scared of them. Teachers can't get provincial standards.

Choice of course with or without exam. Both say exam. One because it will raise the mark because it is only on what you know, not what type of a person you are. Other because it gives them a better idea of how they do versus all other people, not just those in one particular type of school. It may bring my mark down, but I want to know whether I can do well compared to everybody else. It tells me what is expected.

Learning because you want to learn is interesting. Learning for the sake of a test is boring.

Learning should be concepts but exams say that learning of detail is what is important. It shouldn't be that way. Thinking is more important than memorizing but the exams say that learning is memorizing.

Gets in the way of I.B. (for one student) and in the way of advance placement (for the other). We take our courses and then we have a cram course for the provincial exam. That shouldn't be.

Grade 12 is Hell and its the Exams. They place too much stress on the students. People drop out of extracurricular activities for exams and it is tough to pickup these activities after exams. You loose ground.

The exams put so much strain on the students that they feel that they don't have the study skills to cope. Study habits should be part of the lower grade curriculum, not something that you have to relearn or learn for the first time in grade 12.

I'm afraid of what will happen if I should be sick or just have a bad day. The exam may not measure what I really know. For this reason, the exams should only be worth 30%.

We need a month to study for the finals. This means that the teacher has to finish the course a month early. There is no time for questions or even review during the year. It is too rushed.

You can see the stress on the teacher; the harried look.

The honor roll is not fair because of the selection of courses. For the honor roll, all courses are given equal weight: examinables and non-examinables, but it is way more difficult to get a good mark in a examinable course. Many honor roll students find themselves off the honor roll for the first time in grade 12. They think that they are becoming stupid. Often the family and peer pressure is tremendous when you are no longer on the honor roll. This adds to the exam stress.

Courses are selected mainly on the basis of exams, not because of interst.

Kids who don't write exams are given two extra weeks of holiday!

Many more kids are planning to go to Douglas and other colleges because it is easier to get into and then transfer to university. They feel that they are being forced into the long route because of the untenable demands made of their time in grade 12.

All examinable subjects have "tons" of homework. There is no coordination between classes and often a good student may be up past midnight every night. Students need counselling or teachers need to get together on homework.

Some students are planning to get to post-secondary through "adult-status" rather than bother with the transcript hassle and exam pressures.

I see inconsistencies in the practice exams that we use. The weights given to different questions do not seem fair or consistent.

The exams are power tests. Give shorter tests or longer times. The balance between time allotted and content does not seem right.

Too many "doors" seem dependent on ALGEBRA test results. We have to accept this without question. Tell us why or give alternatives!

We have to compete with returning grads who may only be taking one course. The rules of competition are not clear.

For university, there is very little difference in prerequisites between programs. Why? It does not make sense.

Academic students are loosing life skills but gaining knowledge that they may or may not use when they graduate.

There should be a scholarship for every subject written, based on that single exam. Not across 3 subjects.

This is supposed to be the best years of our lives, but the exams promote "Catch 22". We can't do this without that, but you need this to do that.

With the exams hanging over me I have no time to sleep and no time to myself. Is it me or the system — something is wrong.

Some alternatives on multiple-choice don't make sense: "why have them?", you don't always need four or five alternatives. It takes us 4 minutes to review each M.C. question in class. During the exam we need to get through one every 1 and 1/2 minutes.

I like to have taken courses from a variety of sources (teachers) because it maximizes the people I can go to for help.

Because the exams are forcing the grades down, more friends are applying to community colleges. It is less trouble and less pressure.

We see the exams put stress on teachers. The results reflect their work. Ever look at absenteeism and burnout for grade 12 teachers?

Exam marks are compared from one class to another across years. Is this fair? can't the classes be different. Can we be misjudged?

Classes are smaller in grade 12 examinable courses.

Do a comparison across districts if you have to, not individuals or individual classes.

We don't want to be forced into competition by exams. What you achieve is what you get.

The exams make us into numbers. We have lost some of our personal identity. We are no longer ourselves.

K.2 Parents

Generally the parent group considered the exams appropriate for schools and for the students. The group also viewed the exams as good preparation for university and to some extent life in general.

The idea of the exams provoking stress within the students was accepted. But this was viewed as not necessarily positive but as good preparation for life. The exams set a "tone" for serious endeavours such as university and college, and life to some extent — and this was viewed as a good thing. There was concern about the 2-hour exam counting for a substantial portion of the student's final grade, but this was not viewed as major issue.

However, the parents pointed out that the exam program is aimed at the minority of students — those going on to post-secondary education. Most students do not go from high school to university or college but rather into employment. There does not appear to be any attention paid to these students who are the majority of high school students in the province. Although it was pointed out that exams could be used to pay some attention, the group did not express strong feeling either for or against this possibility. But the parents did express concern that this group of students was not being attended to.

Parents reported that their use of exam results (and test results in general) is confined to estimating how well their child is doing. This was reported as generally meaning that current results are compared to past performance — to gauge whether he/she is doing as well as they can. The notion of "making the effort" is reported to be important rather than comparing to the performance of other students. The current reports (percentage and lettergrades) were considered adequate.

The exams are universal everybody is treated the same way. It is fair because it is consistent

Stressful for students, particularly for kids going to university — it means their life

Maybe its the first time for stress but it won't be the last. Kids need to learn to work under pressure

Is this what we want from kids? Is this a valuable skill to be able to side down and immediately come up with a right answer out of your head? What are we testing for in the processes we use? I'm not questioning the value of what the kids are learning but how the kids have to display it. Do we want to produce kids who are just good exam writers?

The kids work hard to build for one day. In our community last year the exams had to be put off for two days because of bad weather and a flood. The kids had to build up again and some couldn't do it. It wasn't fair.

Teachers mark should match the exam mark. That way we can tell if a teacher is doing his or her job.

We're teaching our children to play trivial pursuit. The types of exams necessitate simple answers when the problems of the world don't have simple answers.

The process of exam taking and the focus on exams confines our thinking. It leads to putting too much weight on things that are "examinable".

My kid won't work. He is smart and learns easily and he knows that he can do well and shine on the exam so he does nothing in class.

We're on semester. My kids courses are finished right now. They spend the rest of the semester learning nothing but how to write the exam and practicing on the exams so that they can score better. They could be using that time to learn all kinds of good stuff. Preparing for the exams is necessary for the students but it is really a waste of time.

Kids choose their courses by how much work they have to put into it. Kids ask counselors if there is a government exam. If there is they avoid it and if there isn't, they take it. We will all take the easy way out unless we are forced to take the hard way.

Can kids be motivated to work without this big exam at the end to scare them?

With the exam my kid had to drop curling. He didn't want to but the scholarship practice sessions were on the same nights as his curling and he had to make a choice.

The kids treat the examinable subjects more seriously than the other subjects. I don't really care what my kid gets in drama or foods, only about algebra and English and courses like that.

In hiring we don't look at the exam marks. We are interested in the applicant as a person; do they seem motivated, alert, dedicated, etc. If they need a degree we make sure they have one but we don't check the high school marks

I don't know enough about the exams and neither do the kids. They are not prepared enough. The system does not prepare them, they have never had to do this type of thing before and they are scared because it counts so much bu they don't know what to expect. They should be at all grades throughout the system if they are going to have them at all.

Among my child's friends there are two types of students: those that worry like heck about the exams and "have" to get an A (for them, less than an A is a fail), and those that just want to get it over with; all they care is to get a P (write the exam and get out of here.

Effect on extra-curricular. My kid is really good at both volleyball and basketball. Last year she was on three teams, but this year she she doesn't have time. She played on one fun volleyball team only. My son has always been in every band in the school and always pacticiapted in concerts and plays. This year he plays in one noon hour stage band and is not going to be in any plays or play at any concerts.

One positive aspect is that I have seen more studying and homework this year than in all the years of school combined.

We have always encouraged our child and put pressure on her, but this year we are trying to take the pressure off. She spends too much time studying, she forgets that she should have some social life. Her only friends are those she studies with. One old friend she had for years has now been cut off because she won't study enough.

Scholarships put more pressure on than the regular exams. It isn't enough to just get an A, you have to be a high A; you have to beat everybody else. Some competition is OK, but this is ridiculous.

My child's friends pick their courses due to exams and so does our child. He wanted to take History because he is interested in it, but History has a government exam and he felt he couldn't take more than three exams. He is taking a foods course instead.

Move to 40% right direction, but should go to 30% or 35%.

My kid does less extracurricular in grade 12 — e.g., gave up piano.

It is not clear to me why the time in school is given so little weighting.

What happened to the learning assessment tests? We got good provincial information from them.

Teacher performance becomes very important. Some teachers of examinable subjects get rid of weak students into non-examinable courses so that the poor students will not reflect on their record.

Why is there no Scholarship in English?

English teacher feels that the exams pull down the A+ student because the exam material is geared to the mediocre (average) student.

The marking sessions are great! Good practice, puts you in touch with the marking situations. Best in-service ever. All teachers should have to go, say once every four years.

Why isn't there an oral or speaking section in the English test. Some teachers teach oral speaking and there is no recognition of this work on the exam. With the influx of foreign students today, a person may pass English on the basis of the written work only. The Final mark may not be representative of speaking ability.

The range of final marks is less after the school marks are merged with the provincial marks. This makes my class look more homogeneous then I feel that it is: I.e., I have fewer A's and fewer failures. It makes it hard for a student to get an A. Making it 70/30 would help (30 from Prov. exams).

Good to know where in the province your students stand.

Only 1/3 of the teachers (in Senior Secondary) teach examinable subjects. Many borderline students appear in nonexaminable subjects: the examinable subjects don't get the borderline students.

In a semestered school, some students take English 11 one Semester and English 12 the next. This promotes the teacher to teach to the exam and only that!

The exams bring so much pressure on the students that some opt out of examinable subjects. Now we are seeing some of these people return to take examinable courses later in life. Sometimes this is awkward to deal with.

A lot of stress avoidance takes place ... planning to avoid stress not planning to get the best education.

The test makes the students a number not a person.

Teachers say that students don't seek out particular teachers, but the students say they do.

The scholarship program doesn't recognize that most kids (have to) take Math and Science and not Humanities. The competition therefore is unfair because of the way the marks are averaged across three subjects. There should be some scholarships for the top of each subject regardless of how well that person did on any other subjects! Many people in the humanities don't do well in math or sciences.

As a teacher I worry about how the stats are being used. I sometimes feel it is like a trial without a jury. If you have good students you get good stats; bad students you get bad stats and then look out!

The schools still look for the best coaches rather than the best (academic) teachers.

If it looks like a student might fail, get rid of him/her. Fudge the stats: load up good teachers and load up good students.

As a Parent, I resent the value placed on the exams. We need a better compromise between "education" and writing exams.

How much time a teacher should place on student evaluation should be written into the curriculum guide and the teacher should be given adequate time to do it. Not squeezed between other required components.

As a parent, the kids talk to siblings and create an atmosphere of impending doom.

When an exam comes up, it takes away from other courses.

I feel that stress is related to lack of preparation. Now I use old exams as preliminary exams and the amount of stress is reduced (for the good students).

Teach test taking skills in grade 11. If the skills aren't there in grade 11, the students find it difficult in grade 12.

Give us inservice on the exams — Make the teacher take the exam — Concentrate on making better teachers, not just better exams.

Provincial accountability with regard to the costs of running the exam program. What are the paybacks? Is it worth the money, time and effort? Not just the Ministry costs, but the school costs as well.

In some ways, I feel that the exams protect the kids from bad teachers and benefits the low-end students if they get to stay with the better teachers.

Helps the teacher unify the students for the cause. Its the teacher and the students against the exam.

K.3 Teachers

Move to 40% right direction, but should go to 30% or 35%.

My kid does less extracurricular in grade 12 — e.g., gave up piano.

It is not clear to me why the time in school is given so little weighting.

What happened to the learning assessment tests? We got good provincial information from them.

Teacher performance becomes very important. Some teachers of examinable subjects get rid of weak students into non-examinable courses so that the poor students will not reflect on their record.

Why is there no Scholarship in English?

English teacher feels that the exams pull down the A+ student because the exam material is geared to the mediocre (average) student.

The marking sessions are great! Good practice, puts you in touch with the marking situations. Best in-service ever. All teachers should have to go, say once every four years.

Why isn't there an oral or speaking section in the English test. Some teachers teach oral speaking and there is no recognition of this work on the exam. With the influx of foreign students today, a person may pass English on the basis of the written work only. The Final mark may not be representative of speaking ability.

The range of final marks is less after the school marks are merged with the provincial marks. This makes my class look more homogeneous then I feel that it is: I.e., I have fewer A's and fewer failures. It makes it hard for a student to get an A. Making it 70/30 would help (30 from Prov. exams).

Good to know where in the province your students stand.

Only 1/3 of the teachers (in Senior Secondary) teach examinable subjects. Many borderline students appear in nonexaminable subjects: the examinable subjects don't get the borderline students.

In a semestered school, some students take English 11 one Semester and English 12 the next. This promotes the teacher to teach to the exam and only that!

The exams bring so much pressure on the students that some opt out of examinable subjects. Now we are seeing some of these people return to take examinable courses later in life. Sometimes this is awkward to deal with.

A lot of stress avoidance takes place ... planning to avoid stress not planning to get the best education.

The test makes the students a number not a person.

Teachers say that students don't seek out particular teachers, but the students say they do.

The scholarship program doesn't recognize that most kids (have to) take Math and Science and not Humanities. The competition therefore is unfair because of the way the marks are averaged across three subjects. There should be some scholarships for the top of each subject regardless of how well that person did on any other subjects! Many people in the humanities don't do well in math or sciences.

As a teacher I worry about how the stats are being used. I sometimes feel it is like a trial without a jury. If you have good students you get good stats; bad students you get bad stats and then look out!

The schools still look for the best coaches rather than the best (academic) teachers.

If it looks like a student might fail, get rid of him/her. Fudge the stats: load up good teachers and load up good students.

As a Parent, I resent the value placed on the exams. We need a better compromise between "education" and writing exams.

How much time a teacher should place on student evaluation should be written into the curriculum guide and the teacher should be given adequate time to do it. Not squeezed between other required components.

As a parent, the kids talk to siblings and create an atmosphere of impending doom.

When an exam comes up, it takes away from other courses.

I feel that stress is related to lack of preparation. Now I use old exams as preliminary exams and the amount of stress is reduced (for the good students).

Teach test taking skills in grade 11. If the skills aren't there in grade 11, the students find it difficult in grade 12.

Give us inservice on the exams. Make the teacher take the exam. Concentrate on making better teachers, not just better exams.

Provincial accountability with regard to the costs of running the exam program. What are the paybacks? Is it worth the money, time and effort? Not just the Ministry costs, but the school costs as well.

In some ways, I feel that the exams protect the kids from bad teachers and benefits the low-end students if they get to stay with the better teachers.

Helps the teacher unify the students for the cause. Its the teacher and the students against the exam.

Accountability for each teacher. Makes every teacher accountable for what they are teaching. The exam specs are the curriculum. This is good in that every student gets a fair chance and nobody gets on their pet topic and leaves out the others, but it is also bad in that it narrows the curriculum due to the type of test (focuses on trivial pursuit type knowledge and ignores processes and higher level skills). It also separates the curriculum a la curriculum guide from curriculum a la exam specs. Despite the fact that the Ministry says that you should cover these other areas that are not examinable, that does NOT happen. The exam specs are the curriculum. It restricts what you teach since you must teach to the exam.

School has become mark driven. Students don't care whether they have learned or understand anything, they only care what the mark will be. We argue about all kinds of things in non-examinable courses, beliefs, values, methods, etc. In examinable courses all we argue about are marks, usually only 1/2 a mark here or there. I question whether students are better now than they were before the exams. They may be able to get the right answer but are they educated?

We are being asked to cover too much in too short a time (semester teacher). Also, the exams try to test too much in too short a time.

In English, exams are dismally inadequate tests of the curriculum. The exams focus on only a very narrow area of learning.

Exams teach the kids to find the right answer, not construct or create the right answer (or an acceptable answer). We actually teach the kids to take the possible responses, eliminate the ones that are wrong, and then try out the others for fit to the question (Work backwards from the answers to the questions)

Kids who are interested and keen, but perceive the exam to be too tough avoid the courses. Kids don't take courses to broaden their knowledge, they focus on what they know they can do well in. The teachers support the kids in this tendency, counselling kids who they think will not do well to avoid the course.

The kids feel that the exams are too tough. The teachers think that the exams lack rigor and only test facts.

All kids care about is "is it on the exam?" They don't want to learn things that are just valuable or interesting.

Exams motivate kids, but they motivate them to get marks, not to learn. On the other hand, as an external or extrinsic motivator they may serve the purpose of ingraining or naturalizing interest in the topic and thus create some intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation does not come unless kids participate and that requires some extrinsic motivation to get them started.

Time consuming activities (those that produce few learning outcomes per hour spent) such as labs, projects and field trips are not done. We have to use methods that are time efficient due to crunch of time. We therefore go to lecture and assume that because we "say" something that we have taught it and that the kids have learned it. They may learn it and understand it better and have long term retention through the more time consuming method BUT it isn't time efficient so we don't use it in examinable courses.

Courses in other grade and non-examinable courses are now structured very much like examinables with tables of specs and formal final exams etc. This is done to prepare the students and get them used to the method. We use a lot more multiple choice tests in class now so that the students will get used to that. We have to give them practice on taking exams.

There are occasions where students are not allowed to write the exam even though they have taken the course because if they are allowed to write they will do poorly and the school average will come down. We are judged on the school average, not how many or what type of students we had, only on the final exam score.

In the social sciences, the curriculum is process oriented but processes are cut to focus on what the exam will test. If I want better results on the exams it will be at the expense of learning outcomes that are not tested. (processes and higher level thinking).

In extra-curricular there are isolated cases where the exams have a major impact on students But it is not the norm. Most make the choice not to participate or only to participate in one thing they really like. However, there is a tendency to dissuade students from participating in extra-curricular activities, particularly after the first term, because it will lower the marks. They can't afford the time for both good marks on the exam and participating in a lot of trips or a major drama or music production (particularly when most have part-time jobs and other responsibilities out of school.

There have actually been cases, and we have had them here, where we have had teen-aged suicides that are attributable to the stress placed on students. One of the highest stresses that they face is the exams. The cases we have had have not been the poor student either, they have been the very good who are afraid that they can't keep up the standards they have set.

Involvement in the exams process is the BEST in-service a teacher can ever have.

I graduated in a system without exams and it was a disaster. Nobody knew what anybody else was doing. The exams control the curriculum and give us standards.

I am disturbed by the tendency to cut corners and streamline in order to cut costs, especially in the marking of the English exams. This streamlining is reducing the positive in-service effects of participating in marking.

If the intent is accountability, then the exam program is not fair. We are using the industrial model but we have no control over the raw materials we are given and must use. It puts on the face of accountability but it is not educationally sound.

Weighting is far too high. I might be satisfied with 30-70.

I have tried to alter my tests and assignments so that my marks will mirror the exam marks.

I don't care if my marks are the same as the exam marks; sometimes they shouldn't be. However, I know that I am not judged by how close my marks are to the exam. If I ever thought that was happening I would change and I would also probably withdraw my support and participation in the exam process.

We are supposed to be teaching to and considering individual differences. However, the exams are directly the opposite. Only in extreme cases and very unusual circumstances are individual differences considered. The exams are too inflexible, from what is on them to when the kids have to write them. Last year I had one kid that is a dud in the morning, but really wakes up and performs after lunch and his exam for my course was first thing in the morning. He bombed. He should have been allowed to write in the afternoon.

Some kids drop out because they won't do well on the exam. They are interested and want to take the course but they know they won't do well on the exam so they don't take the course.

The stress is as much due to the formality and inflexibility of the process as it is to the content tested.

In Alberta there have been cases where if the students of a first year (probationary) teacher don't do well on the exams they are not rehired.

I teach Sc 10, Chem 11 and Chem12. The table of specs for chem 12 tell me what I should be doing (or at least emphasizing) and making sure I cover in Science 10.

What bothers me is how the results are used. I have heard many stories about how they are used to judge how good a teacher is. If they do that here, I am going to kick a bunch of kids out so they don't pull my class average down.

There are NO grade 12 students in our band this year. Unless some credit is given, we are going to lose our whole music program.

We can't get enough tutors. Parents are phoning every day for us to find their child a tutor.

Teaching techniques which use too much time for what the kids learn such as labs and field trips are by the board in grade 12 subjects. I use them a lot in my other courses, but I don't have the time if there is that exam at the end and the kids have to face it.

The weight assigned the exam mark in relation to the school mark was viewed as inappropriate given that the exams consisted of 2 hours interaction with the student. This was viewed as unlikely to provide a comprehensive sample of student performance to yield an estimate of achievement that counted for 40% of the final grade in that subject.

The use of multiple-choice items was viewed as causing a lean towards memory-type student performance. Particularly in those subject areas that had a "process" orientation such as English 12, multiple-choice items were not the ideal format. However, in subjects such as math and science, the multiple-choice format was better suited. The point was also made that constrained choice responses tended to disadvantage students that had a broad knowledge base and could develop a number of correct, alternative responses to a given item.

The examinations have had effect upon the manner in which courses are presented. This was particularly so from a student perspective, in that students were keen to insure instruction kept on topic (exam related material only) and there is an increased concern over school awarded marks (since these are combined with the exam results for the final grade). Further, there is increased attention paid by teachers to their in-class tests to keep them similar in format and content to the Provincial Exams. However, some subjects (such as Communications 12 with its aural component) did deliberately test student performance in areas that were not part of the examination.

The examination were viewed as providing some "framework" for the program to be developed for a particular curriculum, but the exams have a constraining effect on the scope of the subject presented in the grade 12 class. Research and development of written assignments is curtailed since this tends to require substantial involvement of time, and time tends to be severely limited due to the demands of the exams in terms of what has to "be covered".

The teachers reported that exam results are not used to any great extent. They reported that they viewed the results of their students and compared the results with their "predictions". They reported that generally their prediction were accurate although some students did achieve much higher than anticipated scores (through intensive preparation for the exam), or lower (test anxiety or some traumatic personal event). They also reported that the exam results are not systematically used within the district. Some individual administrators do use the results for "evaluative" purposes but this is not a general phenomenon within the district.

Working on marking committees or exam preparation committees was viewed positively (and all respondents had done so). The experience served as valuable professional development in that one could meet with colleagues to interact over the subject area — this helped clarify their owns views on the curriculum and expand their knowledge of general thinking on the subject area by colleagues throughout the province.

K.4 Principals

The exam system increases stress in/on teachers and students.

Teacher spend a lot of time trying to get the school marks the same as the exam marks. Is this a good thing?

Puts stress on Administration. Also unreasonable deadlines from Ministry makes it hard to comply. In a small school, all you need is for your secretary to get sick and everybody is unhappy: the Ministry, the Administration, the teachers, and the students (e.g., I got the lists for confirmation today and the Ministry wants them back tomorrow and it goes on and on.) I would rather have School based exams or maybe district exams.

If the Ministry used Assessment data better, along with the accreditation process, they would know know was doing the job and who wasn't. I feel that they introduced the exams because they felt teachers were untrustworthy. Doesn't accreditation address this?

Exams follow political thinking. Will we have exams if there is a change in Government?

The exam process takes up too much time of the school adminsistration.

The administration forms don't always cover all cases (students) and then you have to gerrymander.

The lack of money means that M.C. questions are used when they shouldn't be. How can we measure higher concepts, as set out in the curriculum guide, with M.C. questions.

From an administration viewpoint, the scholarship exam should be scheduled as totally different exam and not as a continuation of the regular exam.

Scheduling everything is difficult enough as it is.

We need more time to verify reports and information from the Ministry.

Curriculum is driven by the exam. We'll end up like California. Big Brother is watching — The system is set on mistrust. What rights to the teachers, administration or students have when the System works against them?

I'm sick and tired about hearing about the AVERAGE SCHOOL. As far as I can tell, there isn't any average school. Parts of a school may be average, but that's all; every school has independent problems. We are being compared against none schools.

Why test grade 12? Test grade 10 instead.

Too much talk about exams.

With all the emphasize on exams, you may end up with smart kids but poor citizens! We are loosing our perspective between teaching kids the skills to become a functional member of society and pumping them full of knowledge. Both teachers and kids are spending more time on content as apposed to the use of that content. This is a direct result from the exams, the exams mainly test content and nothing else counts.

Entry to the Universities is a problem if the marks are delayed. The hassle factor when the system goes awry is great. The attitude of the Ministry is that it is always the School's fault and the school is adopting the attitude that it is always the student's fault and the universities feel caught in the centre.

If you don't reach a certain level because of an exam, you "die on the vine". Summer school or correspondence school are not always possible for lower SES students or single parent families and not enough attention can be given to kids who are repeating courses. The system is seen as being geared toward only those who succeed. The stigma, disgrace, and loss of dignity are the rewards of the failing student (and we wonder why the students feel stress).

Teachers are not given enough time to adequately prepare the students to be test-wise, to evaluate them as reliably as the teacher and the system would like, teach content and show them how to apply what you teach.

Exam scheduling is a problem! The only real alternative is to shut down the school during the exam periods.

The administration lives in fear of staff getting sick or labor problems when it comes to exams.

We feel that the Ministry should set up a technical subcommittee to look only at administration problems. Now everything is done by computers and computer people. What the administration needs and how the computer wants things done does not always coincide. Lets get together on this.

Exams promote the "zero-sum" game: I win you loose. This often creates a situation of mistrust and uncooperation.

The Ministry should allow for costs of duplication of old exams. It is becoming part of the curriculum by de facto. The ministry should provide exam work sheets.

District staff only look at mean scores. They don't take into account the makeup of the distribution that created the mean. Let the Ministry educate District staff on how they look at the scores since the Ministry provides them with the data.

Many teachers refuse to teach courses with provincial exams.

I think we are seeing fewer boys in examinable courses. Because boys mature later, they may not be given the opportunity to take the courses. Once you are taken out of the "academic" program, there is no opportunity to return. Kids who fall through the cracks are generally lost and often drop out.

Prestige is less if you teach nonexaminables.

If exams are going be part of the system, they should be stressed from grade 8 on.

Streaming is starting at lower grades. I think that this takes place because the teachers are under too much stress and under funded. It is easier to stream then try to accommodate a wide range of students. This is done with testing. The system doesn't really know the consequences of this action other than that once placed in one stream it is difficult if not impossible to change streams.

I don't believe that exams are always used as intended.

Exams force more dropouts. Often these dropouts are short only one course.

Judgments are made on examination results without taking into account the shape of the distribution or the makeup of that distribution.

The scholarship program is not fair, because the programs and facilities across schools and districts is not the same. The students do not have equal opportunity to receive or even compete. Look at those schools that run a Baccalaureate program — other schools without have to compete and are judged on the number of scholarships that are awarded to THEIR students. It is not fair to the students or the schools. The only reason some of these students received a scholarship is that they happened to go to a particular school.

The people who are receiving scholarships may not be the "best" people. They may be smart, but socially inept, because they spend all their time studying away from people and the real world.

The exams promote streaming, yet streaming is not an "official" part of the program.

With the influx of off-shore and French immersion students, the exams should be given in more languages. We are not adequately measuring their knowledge, but rather their language ability.

Small schools don't really have the opportunity to compete fairly for scholarships.

More tutors are being used during week and weekends.

People who elect not to go to university are forced out of examinable subjects.

People who don't take examinable courses are forced out of the university opportunity. Why don't universities look at courses other than examinable subjects?

The exam system limits the choices that students can make.

K.5 Administrators

The use of the exam results was reported to be rather low — essentially reading the reports so that any anomolies might be noted and if necessary some action action taken. However, it was indicated that the use of results was handled with sensitivity for individuals and consideration of context. It was pointed out that some individual administrators may use the results for evaluation-related motivation of staff — "get the results up" kind-of- thing to promote academic performance of the school. District level results are reported to the school board.

The group viewed the exams as having a substantial impact on the curriculum — essentially by removing the control of the curriculum from the classroom. This was viewed by most as a negative impact — reducing the quality of education and detrimental to the status of teachers. An alternative view was expressed regarding the benefits, particularly to more remote school district, of standardizing the curriculum to insure coverage of particular instructional elements. The group did agree that teachers should be responsible for the curriculum.

It was agreed that the exams do indeed drive the curriculum in grade 12 — particularly through constraining the time available for anything other than those curricular components that are to be examined. Further, the exams were regarded as testing memory of students, and this was not viewed positively.

If exams were to be used as indicators of school performance, then a broader base of information should also be available. The schools are being asked to take on additional tasks (eg: family life education, drug abuse education, and so on) yet these activities should also be taken into account in describing school performance.

The exams do have an effect on school climate in the April to June period, in that the seriousness of the school increases with the intense focus of final exams by the grade twelves.

Politically it is great! The exams show that standards are important. The public needs to be shown that we are serious about education and the standards we have and the exams do that well. When a parent questions me about standards in our school I can always fall back on the exams.

Exams cause students to opt out of possible courses because they are afraid of the exam. More kids are dropping out or being counselled out because it will not look good if the school has a high fail rate or a low class average.

The exams narrow curriculum in that if it counts on the final exam it is seen to be important and worth teaching and learning. If it is not on the exam, then it is not worth learning.

There is the definite innuendo that poor marks on the exams mean that the school or the teacher is not doing a good job. Nobody ever looks at our participation rates (how many students are taking the courses)

In a small school it is a real problem. We don't have enough students to offer a lot of options, but we have to offer the examinables. As a result, many students who really should not be taking or really can't handle the total material of examinable courses take them anyway. Then our school average goes down and everybody gets upset.

It was a positive move to go to the 60-40 but it should go even farther to at least 70-30. It will still have the effect of being fair to everybody and keeping standards but will allow for more allowances for individual differences.

The grade 12 exams have lead to situations as ridiculous as all the kids marching down to the gym to write a two hour final in woodworking 8 and physical education 9! We do this because we want to prepare them for the exams they will have to write later on.

Standards tend to filter down through the grade. Because the Alg 12 final exam exists, the grade 8 math student will fail a math 8 student because he will never be able to handle algebra 12. It dictates curriculum too. The grade 8 math teacher stresses the things they think the student will need to progress to Algebra 12.

We are seeing a tutorial society. They start in the school at 7:00 in the morning, run through lunch hour and often there are groups in the school until 10:00 at night. It really builds up as the exams get closer. The good students eat and do everything together (hopefully not sleep) so they can study. They don't let the "grunts" in with them.

Exams have made it impossible to have a meaningful discussion about outcomes. As soon as exam scores are mentioned, there is an immediate fear and defensiveness no matter what you actually do./ This defensiveness totally eliminates any constructive discussion of problems. The exam really hurt communication.

There is certainly a lot more adherence to the curriculum now. However, it may not be the adherence to the curriculum but rather an adherence to the tables of specifications. That is great as long as the tables match the curriculum.

We penalize some of our kids who are really very bright and talented but just don't write well and we certainly penalize those who don't write exam well. If you think a little bit divergent then you are dead. The tests test only one type of learning style with one type of testing style.

With the Year 2000 the whole testing program will have to change direction. Maybe we will see the day when we give the final exam (a major problem) to the student and tell him or her to come back with a proposed solution in a week. Use whatever resources, including other people (we now call this cheating), to solve it in the best way you can. That is what the Year 2000 is talking about.

There is an enormous amount of cost in terms of time just to administer the program. On a semester system, which we have to use as a small school, we lose two weeks to the January exams, then on top of it I am going to lose 7 of my best teachers for a week (35 teacher days) to mark the exams. It is great in-service, but are we getting value for our time and money?

What bothers me is the mind set that the objective of education is to score well on the tests rather than to learn.

The exam leads to an increased dropout rate (particularly just before the exams) and people who continue to think of themselves as failures. They become a real burden on society. We get a lot more calls from parents with concerns just before the exams.

As soon as you make it standardized in order to make it fair for all people, you of necessity make it unfair to some because it is inflexible.

We lose some kids because the home and the parents don't value education. In other cases there is incredible pressure from the home for the student to get an "A" (no matter what it is on). This leads to students avoiding the "hard" (examinable) coursed and taking the "easy" ones.

Major impact is curricular control — gives consistency of what is being taught and what the expectations are from school to school and district to district.

A major concern is the fit of the year 2000 document to the exams. Students and teachers are being asked to develop new ideas and methods to look at continuous progress and skill development but we will have not only the same, but an EXPANDED exam system that emphasizes an end product of memorization of facts.

Not all students write exams well. The system now favors the exam writers rather than the learners. Although there is a fair match between learning and exam writing, the fit is by no means perfect. Should we teach a la the *Year 2000* or do we just prepare students for exams and teach them how to do well on the exams?

The teachable moment goes out the window. When something interesting and valuable comes up neither the teacher nor the students will take advantage of it because there is too much pressure to cover the curriculum for the exam.

Pressure on teachers and kids is tremendous. Some pressure is healthy and exams should produce healthy pressure which is motivational. BUT it doesn't work out that way. The pressure is extremely unhealthy.

Preparing for exams leads to distortion of the teachers mark. Often the teachers mark should not match the provincial exam because the exam only covers some aspects of the curriculum and the teacher should be looking at the other aspects. However, two things lead to the non-examined areas of the curriculum being ignored and only the examinable part being actually put into practice. 1. The pressure from administration, students and parents for the teacher mark to match the exam mark. Teachers are judged how good they are by how close their score comes to the exam mark. 2. As the teacher prepares the students for the exam, their own view of the curriculum becomes distorted and they judge kids on the same things that the exam does.

There is a tendency to counsel out kids who will not do well on the exam. Teachers and schools are judged by how well students do by both the public and the upper administration (who should know better). However, participation rates are not considered (or if they are, they are not valued very much). As such, in order to "look" good, one has to get rid of the low scorers. Students who are just interested, or students who are late developers or who have never had a chance to try the material are excluded from the course. You can't take the course unless is it seen that you will do well and if you don't do well as the course progresses, you are counselled out.

Our musical this year has been cancelled because the older kids are opting out. They feel they can't afford the time for rehearsals and practice because they need time to study for the exams. They want to be involved in music and drama, but that doesn't "count".

The curriculum is changing in the junior high to match the exams, particularly in math. Teachers concentrate on topics which prepare kids for Algebra 12 and leave out topics that are not continued. This carries over into even English where there is an increasing concentration on the expository essay in grade 8, 9, and 10 because that is what is on English 12. In Communications 12 students learn by rote the form of the business letter because that is what will be on the exam.

Increase in both in-school and out-of-school tutorial. Parents are coming to the school to get tutors. Becoming a booming business of tutoring students, even in grade 11 subjects to prepare for grade 12. Tutors COST, so education is becoming better for the rich. The poor can't afford tutors.

Leading to a social split in the school. There is a student frustration with the "slugs" in the class that are holding the rest back. "Get that stupid idiot out of here so we can get on with it". Protests from students to administration to remove students from classes, not because they are misbehaving or interrupting, but because they are holding other students back.

Disruption in semestered schools. We "waste" an extra two weeks over non-semestered schools. Much physical disruption for large-scale testing. Disrupts the whole school, all the way from grade 8 up for just the grade 12 examinables.

Appendix 16

END

U.S. Dept. of Education

Office of Education
Research and
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ERIC

Date Filmed

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